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ABSTRACT

The 13 papers presented in this collection all deal with journalism and journalists from colonial America through the 19th century. The papers and their authors are: "'The Presence of God Was Much Seen in Their Assemblies': Religious News in Colonial America" (David A. Copeland); "And So They Came: The Persuasive Effect of American Settlement Literature during the Colonial Era" (Julie Hedgepeth Williams); "The Impact of the American Revolution on the Occupational Ideology of Journalists: A Comparison of Pre- and Post-Revolution Prospectuses" (Patricia L. Dooley); "Trade, Treachery, and Daily Necessities: The Significance of the Sea to Colonial Newspapers" (David A. Copeland); "The Press and the War of 1812" (Susan Thompson); "'A Tincture of Madness': The Failure of Benjamin Franklin's West Indies Printing Partnerships" (Ralph Frasca); "'The Earnest Endeavor': Andrew Brown's Role in Philadelphia's 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic" (Mark A. Smith); "Constantine Rea: An Antebellum Editor" (Nan Fairley); "The Rise of the Fact and 'Naive Empiricism' in Journalism and the Sciences, As Seen in the Great Cholera Epidemics of 1832, 1849, and 1866" (David T. Z. Mindich); "Observers of Crisis and Compromise: The Washington Correspondents of 1850" (Mark J. Stegmaier); "With Respect and Admiration--Walter Mason Camp, Journalist of the Little Big Horn" (Warren E. "Sandy" Barnard); "Domesticity and Municipal Housekeeping Concerns in the Writing of Women Journalists during the Nineteenth Century" (Agnes Hooper Gottlieb); and "From an Incautious Heroine, Ishbel Ross: Arms Outstretched beneath a Backward-Billowing Old Glory" (Beverly G. Merrick). (NKA)

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Part I

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"THE PRESENCE OF GOD WAS MUCH SEEN IN THEIR ASSEMBLIES": RELIGIOUS NEWS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

by

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ABSTRACT

Title: "'The Presence of God Was Much Seen in Their Assemblies': Religious News in Colonial America"

Abstract: This research deals with the religious news presented in colonial newspapers from 1690-1775 by looking at approximately 7,400 newspapers spanning the entire period and representing all extant newspapers. The purpose is twofold. First, this research points out exactly what religious material appeared in newspapers and discovers five basic types of religious news: portrayal of Roman Catholics, documents of colonial religiosity, news of God's providence, news surrounding George Whitefield, and discussions about religious liberty. Second, the research seeks to determine whether religion, as Patricia U. Bonomi has said, was so entwined with life in the eighteenth century that it left its mark indelibly on all aspects of American life.

This research discovers that, according to the papers, religion was a vital part of colonial life. Most Americans viewed a relationship with God as important to their well-being, and newspaper stories intimated that God's providence would be there to protect a person if one was in proper relation with God, but religious implications were not present in all news stories. This paper concludes that news of religion was found in all papers throughout the period, that religion was vital to the lives of most colonial citizens, and that religion tinted the news of the period.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD WAS MUCH SEEN IN THEIR ASSEMBLIES: RELIGIOUS NEWS IN COLONIAL AMERICA

> That mankind have a right to be free in the choice of religion, is a truth that can't be denied, and is a privilege dearer to every sober Christian than any civil privilege whatsoever; and no authority on earth have a right to deprive their subjects of the same.
>
> *Providence Gazette*, 13 October 1770

Early in October 1770, Rhode Island printer John Carter received a letter, its writer requesting it be printed in the *Providence Gazette*. Signed "A PROTESTANT," the writer was outraged that in such an enlightened time, the lands of people were still being confiscated by governments when those people refused to support the government-prescribed form of religion. "To take by force their estates from them, to support a religion or worship that they do not choose, is a piece of oppression that would make even a moral heathen blush," the writer stated about his own colony of Connecticut. "Yet many instances of the same have we had, and still have!"[1] In an era when Americans were in ever greater numbers calling for political freedom, "the free choice of their own religion," as the writer called it, was still being denied to some in colonial America.

For the residents of British colonial America, religion had always been a significant issue. Many of the first English settlers to cross the Atlantic made the hazardous journey for religious reasons, and religion was seen as a vital aspect of life. The Bible was the one book that almost every settler possessed,[2] and religious books and commentaries were basic items on any colonial bookshelf.[3] Parents insisted that children learn to read so that they could understand the Bible, and colleges were begun in by colonial American to train ministers.[4] Religion was, as Patricia U. Bonomi has observed, so entwined with life in eighteenth-century America that religion's mark was left indelibly on all aspects of life.[5]

This research deals with the religious news that was presented in colonial newspapers. For the study, approximately 7,400 editions of all colonial newspapers available on microfilm were read. Newspapers were read in their entirety to discover religious content.[6] A sizable number of religious news items, however, does not mean that all aspects of the news in colonial newspapers were religiously motivated. Nor does it mean that the growing political fervor that captured the attention of many colonial printers from the Stamp Act crisis onward was rooted in the religious beliefs of Americans.[7] Newspapers in the colonial period, regardless of motivation for news, were a reflection of the society that they served, and they were stocked amply with religious news and news indelibly tinted by religion. Religious news was especially heavy in the 1740s when religious revival was rampant in the colonies.

Although many eighteenth-century citizens would no doubt have credited much of the religious interest in revival and discussion of religious issues in print to God's providence, one individual acted as the catalyst for this explosion, and his name was George Whitefield. Whitefield revitalized religion in eighteenth-century America and captured the attention of the colonial press like no other individual. An orator of uncommon ability, Whitefield's first preaching tour, which lasted from October 1739 to January 1741, can be traced accurately through colonial newspapers, and every visit Whitefield made to America from that time to his death in Massachusetts in 1770 was noted in newspapers. News of Whitefield, as Charles E. Clark correctly pointed out, helped colonial newspapers focus their news content upon events that either originated in America or had an immediate impact on American readers.[8]

Colonial newspapers carried on a relationship with Whitefield for thirty years, but the Grand Itinerant was far from being the sole source of religious information in colonial newspapers. Newspaper articles credited many events to God's providence, and religious liberty remained a source of conversation from about 1730 on.[9] Newspapers printed ordination notices of pastors, hymns, scripture passages, and sermons regularly. The religious nature of colonial governments also found its way continually into newspapers through calls for days of "Fasting, Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God." The religious news of colonial newspapers demonstrates that most colonists were Protestants who brought with them to America an intense hatred of the Roman Catholic Church, a hatred that each generation continued to foster throughout the colonial period. In fact, the page one story in the first *Boston News-Letter* dealt with the threat that Catholicism presented to all British citizens.[10]

If, as Bonomi suggests, religion penetrated all aspects of colonial life, then it is only natural to assume that religion played a vital role in the life and content of colonial newspapers. But, did it? Based upon the content of colonial newspapers, religion occupied an important place within society and affected some aspects of all types of news. Most leaders in colonial eighteenth-century America, as Bonomi notes, wanted and expected to build an orderly and reverent society based upon those leaders' preconceived notions of the church, the Puritans offering a prime example.

But as settlers ventured out into the rigors of everyday life, fighting disease, Indians, the elements of nature, and foreign adversaries occupied more of the colonial American's time than actual church attendance.[11] Religion was important, vital, but every piece of news that appeared in colonial newspapers was not tainted with religious overtones. If it was, these religious connotations are lost upon readers from later time periods. Instead, there was news about religion, and there was news about important events. At times the two overlapped as in the case of George Whitefield or when the news of colonial newspapers asserted religious implications for an event such as the hand of God in an earthquake in New England.[12] At other times the news about certain occurrences was, as David Paul Nord observed, "simply the news" and completely unencumbered by any religious strings or implications.[13]

When colonial newspapers deal with religious topics, the news falls into five general categories. Within them, one can see how religious thought shaped opinions and observe how the politics of the day affected religious perception. The five areas discovered include the portrayal of Roman Catholics, documents of colonial religiosity, God's providence, George Whitefield, and religious liberty. The discussion begins with the Roman Catholic Church.

Religion and Colonial Newspapers

The Roman Catholic menace. The intense dislike of Catholics by the Protestant Englishmen of colonial British America was evident throughout the colonial period in colonial newspapers. The dislike of Catholicism was no doubt the product of a two-fold bias. First, of course, was the general theological differences between Catholics and Protestants. The second reason for the intense dislike of Catholicism was rooted in the political situation of Europe. England had long been in political confrontation with France and Spain, both Catholic nations. Anti-Catholic news reports in colonial newspapers increased whenever there was a threat from a Catholic nation against England, and the anti-Catholic news did not necessarily have to pertain to any threat against England. Anti-Catholic news in colonial newspapers was presented to demonstrate the errors of Catholicism as viewed through Protestant lenses, and it portrayed both the Roman church and Catholic kingdoms as barbaric and inhuman in their treatment of non-Catholics.

Fear of a Catholic coup in Scotland and subsequently England spurred the first anti-Catholic news story to appear in the *Boston News-Letter* in 1704. Anne Stuart sat upon the English throne, and England had made sure with the Act of Settlement in 1701 that only Protestant successors could assume the crown of Great Britain. Anne was the last Protestant child of James II, who was forced to abdicate the throne in 1688. But Anne had a half-brother, James III, who was Catholic, and many Englishmen feared that this "Pretender" to the throne would mount an invasion force and enter the British Isles in an attempt to capture the crown for himself.[14] The *News-Letter* apprised Boston citizens of the situation in the Motherland in an article about "the present danger of the Kingdom and of the Protestant

Religion." Not only was the Protestant religion in danger in England, but according to the newspaper report, all of Britain was in danger of being invaded by the French with the express goal of a Catholic takeover of the English monarchy and French control of the nation. The story said:

> Papists swarm in that Nation [Scotland] . . . many Scores of Priests & Jesuits are come hither from France. . . . That the French Kinch [King] knows there cannot be a more effectual way for himself to arrive at the Universal Monarchy, and to ruine the Protestant Interest, than by setting up the Pretender upon the Throne of England.[15]

Threats to the throne of England by a "popish Pretender"[16] continued throughout the colonial period, and news of these activities inflamed anti-Catholic sentiment in newspapers in America. In 1725, fears that the Pretender might recapture the English throne appeared in newspapers, but this time, the news ran concurrently with news of Catholic atrocities against Protestants in Poland. No doubt readers speculated that a Catholic takeover in England would produce similar attacks on English-speaking Protestants. When Catholic-backed troops entered the Polish town of Thorn, the *American Weekly Mercury* reported, numerous citizens had their hands and heads chopped off in the public square. The executed were then drawn and quartered and left around the town.[17] Two weeks later, the *Mercury* stated that "many Lutherans fall a Sacrifice of their Implacable Enemies the Papists."[18] Similar news from other parts of Europe followed.[19]

The fears of a Roman Catholic takeover of England and her colonies through war efforts by the French or Spanish almost always led to anti-Roman Catholic propaganda in colonial newspapers. When England and Spain went to war in 1739, for example, newspapers in America noted the evil way that Catholic nations treated their Protestant citizens. In Cuba, the *American Weekly Mercury* reported, a Protestant missionary was burned alive using green wood in order to increase the pain inflicted. The news report continued that such torture awaited all Protestants who stood in the way of Spanish Catholic conquest. "No Religion can be propagated by Cruelty and the Sword," the article concluded, but they were "always the Spaniards Method."[20] Newspapers in the colonies were already carrying news about Spanish attacks upon English sailing ships before the war with Spain was ever declared, and the fear of imminent attack in the Southern colonies led to a build-up of fortifications and militia activity, especially in South Carolina.[21] There can be little doubt that news items like the one in the *Weekly Mercury* and essays such as "The Wiles of Popery" that appeared in the *South-Carolina Gazette*[22] helped fuel fear of the Spanish and increase anti-Catholic sentiment.

The news of the evils perpetrated by Catholics began to grow again as French and English hostilities gathered momentum in the mid-1740s,[23] culminating in the French and Indian War (1754-1763). The *Maryland Gazette*, at this time, issued a warning on the dangers of Catholicism in America. In the colony begun as a haven for Roman Catholics, this condemnation of the Roman religion no doubt summed up the feelings of most Protestants in America about the dangers of allowing Roman Catholics into the colonies:

> I utterly detest PERSECUTION, on Account of PRIVATE SENTIMENTS in Religion; but there is a wide Difference between THAT and nursing up a Sett of People, who are infatuated till they believe it their DUTY to cut our Throats in Return, and that it is meritorious, and even doing Honour and Service to the All-merciful GOD, for them so to do.
>
> The tender Mercies of the ROMAN CATHOLICS towards HERETICS (when in Power) are known to be VERY CRUELTIES. . . . This Nation has found it ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to restrain ROMAN CATHOLICS by Law, from sitting in either House of Parliament, from voting for Members of Parliament, from holding any Office or Place of Trust or Profit, from PUBLIC Schools and Mass-houses. . . . But I greatly fear not one of those Laws extends to our Colonies in AMERICA, where they would be MORE NECESSARY.[24]

The French menace was defeated by English and American forces, and by 1763, the French were legally removed from America, even though some French activity continued in the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. England and the American colonies experienced no more large and united military efforts against them by their Catholic foes during the remainder of the colonial period. Following the French and Indian War, the American colonies entered into a period of growing hostilities with another enemy, England. Ironically, it was to Catholic nations that the American colonies turned for aid once the Revolution began, demonstrating either that religious tolerance had become more accepted in America by the 1770s or that in the politics of war, the availabiltiy of aid, not religious stripe, produces allies.

Even though Americans of the revolutionary period could separate religion and military aid, religion and politics were not always separate entities in colonial America. The religious activity of colonial governments as found in political decrees is but one of the many examples of the religiosity of colonial America that appeared in colonial newspapers.

Documents of colonial religiosity. Colonial Americans demonstrated their religious beliefs in newspapers in a number of ways. One way was to insert scripture, sermons, and hymns into the newspapers so that they might be shared with all readers. Other ways included weekly tabulations of those baptized and announcements of ordinations of preachers.[25] Political decrees based on religious requirements were also prominent during the colonial period. In cities like Boston, dozens of churches existed, and newspapers were an excellent way to share what went on in a particular church with others. These documents of religiosity affirm the fact that colonial Americans were a religious people with no less than 60 percent of them regularly attending church services in the eighteenth century.[26]

A popular method of demonstrating religious beliefs for colonial citizens was submitting scripture, hymns, and religious poems to newspapers to print. Scriptural interpretation allowed parts of the Bible to fit the colonial situation, as an adaptation of Psalm 23 did. In the colonial version, the shepherd provided food and sustenance that turned the new wilderness of America into a blessed place:

> The Lord my Pasture shall prepare,
> And feed me with a Shepher'd Care:

His Presence shall my Wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful Eye;
My Noon day Walks he shall attend,
And all my Mid-night Hours defend. . . .
Tho' in a bear and rugged Way,
Through devious lonely Wilds I stray,
Thy Bounty shall my Pains beguile:
The barren Wilderness shall smile
With sudden Greens and Herbage crown'd,
And Streams shall murmur all around.[27]

Hymns proclaimed times of joy and important events within the life of the church[28] and reinforced biblical beliefs such as the creation,[29] the significance of God's gift of his son,[30] God's mercy,[31] the saving power of Jesus,[32] and the second coming of Christ.[33]

Sermons, religious documents, and actions taken by church congregations inserted into newspapers often told of the quality of the sermons.[34] The reports could also be politically motivated, and as disharmony with England grew in America, ministers increasingly, according to sermons and hymns in colonial newspapers, turned their efforts toward affirming and supporting revolt against English rule. Following the Boston Massacre and the growing troubles with England, the *Providence Gazette* noted in a hymn entitled "The CHRISTIAN SOLDIER," that "the GREAT CAPTAIN you have chose Never did a Battle lose."[35] Sermons printed in newspapers even made it appear that God mandated both fighting against England and obeying the Continental Congress. *Dunlap's Maryland Gazette* ran a sermon in July 1775 calling on God to "Save us not this Day" if the colonies were in transgression against the will of God in rebelling against England. Far from being against the will of God, the sermon reckoned, Americans had "raised with an express view to perpetuate the name and glory of that sacred altar" of God on which love of country and liberty were what God wanted for his people.[36]

While religious sermons were politically inspired in America, political actions were religiously motivated according to the news of colonial papers, although religion played a larger part in political activities in the first third of the century. Legislation, according to colonial newspapers, addressed moral issues and made everything from selection of ministers to recreation activities a religiously motivated political issue. When a Springfield, Massachusetts, church lost its preacher, it selected a new one according to "Province Law."[37] In 1730, Massachusetts Governor Jonathan Belcher not only outlawed the playing of any games on Sunday, he also mandated that all citizens attend church and be imprisoned if found cursing, drinking, or being lewd on Sunday. The governor said:

> I do hereby strictly prohibit all His Majesty's Subjects of this Province of what Degree or Quality soever, from Playing on the LORD's DAY at any Game whatsoever; and do hereby Command and Require them decently and reverendly to attend the publick Worship of GOD on every LORD's DAY, on pain of the highest Displeasure of this His Majesty's Government. . . . I do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Judges . . . to be very Vigilant and Strict in the Discovery and effectual prosecution and punishment of all Persons, who shall be guilty of Blasphemy, prophane Cursing and Swearing Prophaning the LORD's DAY, excessive Drinking, Lewdness, or other dissolute and disorderly Practices: And they take care effectually to suppress all Lewd Houses, publick Gaming-Houses and Places, and other Disorderly Houses.[38]

In 1705 the "Profanation of the LORD's DAY" was decried in Massachusetts,[39] and in 1775 activities on Sunday were still considered a violation of religious and civil law, according to a letter written to the *Connecticut Journal*:

> THE Sunday before last as I was going to church, I observed a number of men sawing wood near the Governor's gate; and as I returned from church, several persons were skating on a pond in the common. Surely *these things ought not to be*. I hope in the future the civil officers, as well as others, will pay more attention to his Excellency's proclamation *against immorality*.[40]

Although most of the religiously-motivated laws that appeared in colonial newspapers were passed in New England, all colonial governments issued decrees calling for religious acts by their citizens. From *Publick Occurrences* in 1690 onward, governments regularly in the eighteenth century dispensed calls for "a day of solemn FAST, PRAYER, AND

HUMILIATION before Almighty God" to the people of the colonies through colonial newspapers.[41]

Whenever newspapers commented on the results of a day of fasting and prayer, they were speaking of God's hand in the workings of the people. This providential intervention is what almost all of the calls for fasting, prayer, and thanksgiving sought. The calls for public religious days by colonial governments only confirm the fact that religion was an indelible part of everyday colonial life. These public days of worship point to yet another feature of religious news in colonial newspapers—the intervention of God in the lives of his people.

God's providence. When Benjamin Harris listed his reasons for beginning a newspaper, the very first one was so "That Memorable Occurrents of Divine Providence may not be neglected or forgotten, as they too often are."[42] Colonial citizens looked upon many of the events that took place within the confines of their world as divine intervention—the supernatural affecting their own physical world.[43] Calls for days of public fasting and prayer were a way that colonial governments attempted to use the collective power of the people either to get God to intercede for them in times of trouble or to thank God for already providing that assistance. In fact, Pennsylvania's governor declared in 1755 that keeping the people apprised of God's providence was the responsibility of government. In a call for a day of fasting and prayer, the governor's decree stated:

> WHEREAS it is the Duty of every Government to keep alive among the People a just Sense of their entire Dependence on the Providence of Almighty GOD, and to remind them of the intimate Connection between the Divine Favour and Publick Happiness, between National Calamity and National Vice; in order thereby to propagate that since Love of Religion and Virtue, which, under the Christian Dispensation, is the great Means of recommending a people to the Favour and Protection of Heaven . . . I have . . . thought fit to appoint . . . a Day of publick Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer.[44]

God, according to colonial newspaper reports, could work for or against people in any manner he chose. God's intercession, for example, took place when a pair of birds dove into the ocean for no apparent reason, according to an account in the *Boston Gazette* in 1735. The actions of the birds were credited to God because a poverty-stricken worker, Silas Remmington, immediately paddled out in his canoe and snatched the stunned birds from the water so that he might supply his family with a meal. He carried them home to his wife who promptly cooked them. The news item concluded with a neighbor asking Remmington's wife if she was not afraid to eat the birds. "No Reply'd the Woman, we are poor People and GOD has sent 'em us."[45]

Even though God was credited with demonstrations of his favor toward people, like the good fortune of the Remmingtons who were delivered from hunger by the meal from God, most newspaper stories that spoke of God's providence referred to God's judgment upon a sinful people. When bad events happened for which people could find no logical solution, an angry God often became the perpetrator. Earthquakes in 1750 and 1755 were blamed directly on sinful people being punished by an angry God. In 1750, a *Boston Gazette* story concerning an earthquake noted "that it is every man's duty to give attention to all warnings which God in his mercy affords to a sinful people; such warnings we have had by two great shocks of an earthquake."[46] When Boston buildings shook and chimneys crashed to the ground in 1755 from another earthquake, a writer to the *Gazette* said:

> Doubtless various natural Causes may be assigned for these extraordinary Convulsions; but surely no one will question the Agency of the supreme Power, who *maketh the Earth to tremble, and whose Voice Shaketh the Wilderness*--If so inconsiderable a Circumstance as the *falling of a Sparrow to the Ground*, is not without the Notice of our heavenly Father . . . it cannot be suppos'd, that such terrible Events, as the laying Waste large & populous Cities, which has been frequently occasion'd by *Earthquakes*, should happen, without his special Influence and Direction.[47]

Natural causes may have been to blame, but God put them into action, the writer explained in the next edition of the *Gazette*. Since the earthquake occurred on a Sunday, the writer speculated, God in his "infinite Wisdom" caused "natural and moral Causes [to] coincide." "I submit it," the letter writer concluded, "Whether it Be not rational to suppose that natural Causes operated to Effect at that Juncture, to awaken us to a more strict Observance of that holy Day."[48]

The entrance of the terms "natural Causes" and "rational" into the discussion of God's providence was important. During the eighteenth century, Enlightenment thought began to question the concept of God's hand in any human activity. Deist thought, which was inspired by writings such as John Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, did not deny the existence of God or that he created the world. Instead, these rational thinkers believed that the law of nature now functioned as the controller of events. Events had to be explained through natural causes, not through God waving his hand and causing earthquakes to shake the foundations of cities or birds to fall from the sky to provide sustenance for hungry people.[49]

Even though rational thought became the favored stance of many in colonial America, its proponents never completely discredited the providential news items in newspapers, especially when one considers the amount of news about religious revival and George Whitefield that ran in colonial newspapers. Whitefield provided copy for newspapers, and without a doubt Whitefield was seen by many as a man sent by God. As a New York writer, whose poem appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* in 1740 noted about Whitefield, "He comes commission'd from on High." For the next thirty years, God was working directly in America, according to the thought of many such as the writer from New York quoted in Virginia, because of the presence of an itinerant preacher, George Whitefield.

George Whitefield. Everything about George Whitefield was "big news" in colonial newspapers. As Benjamin Franklin's wife wrote to him in 1770 concerning Whitefield's death, "You will see all a bought him in the Papers."[50] The same was true of Whitefield from the moment he arrived in America and began preaching. The amount of press coverage that

Whitefield received may be attributed to several factors. First, religion was important in the lives of colonial Americans. Whitefield offered a powerful religious message. Second, Whitefield provided ample opportunities for people to hear him. It is estimated that he preached 18,000 times during his lifetime, a large number of those sermons being delivered in America and that most Americans had at least one opportunity to hear him speak.[51] Finally, much of the news in papers concerning Whitefield was the product of good public relations. Whitefield traveled with an entourage, and at least during his first preaching tour in 1740, his companion William Seward wrote news accounts of Whitefield's revivals and submitted them to newspapers where Whitefield was currently preaching and to the newspapers in the next major city that he planned to visit.[52] For these reasons, the activities of Whitefield were in the news.

From 1739 to his death in 1770, Whitefield made seven preaching trips to the colonies. As Harry S. Stout correctly pointed out, with Whitefield "a new form of mass communications appeared in which people were encouraged—even commanded—to speak out concerning the great work of grace in their souls. . . . The audience thrilled not only to the gospel message it heard but also to their own great power visibly manifested in mass assembly."[53] Because Whitefield produced this kind of response in people, Isaiah Thomas said of him in *The History of Printing in America*:

> This celebrated itinerant preacher, when he visited America, like a comet drew the attention of all classes of people. This blaze of ministration was extended through the continent, and he became the common topic of conversation from Georgia to New Hampshire. All the newspapers were filled with paragraphs of information respecting him, or with pieces of animated disputation pro or con.[54]

News of George Whitefield changed the priorities of news content in colonial newspapers. With Whitefield, news started to focus more on items of local or intercolonial significance. News of Whitefield's activities in Charleston, Williamsburg, New York, and

Boston, for example, became news with which the citizens of Philadelphia were concerned, in addition to reports of Whitefield's activities in the Pennsylvania city. Whitefield not only changed the priorities of what was in colonial newspapers, he also changed the nature of the other material printed by colonial printers, no doubt based in part on the interest in Whitefield newspaper articles produced. In 1738, there were a total of 133 imprints made by colonial printers, only fifty-six of which were on religious topics. By the end of 1741, the total number of imprints had grown to 241, and 146 of those printings dealt with religious subjects. Religious imprints had grown from slightly more than 40 percent of the total publications to slightly more than 60 percent of all publications.[55]

With such intense interest in religious news in general and in Whitefield in particular, it was only natural that all eleven colonial newspapers that were being printed in 1740 carried items on Whitefield's preaching, his message, and the controversy that he spawned. The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, however, carried the most thorough coverage of the Anglican preacher. That may have been because Whitefield and *Gazette* printer Benjamin Franklin were friends,[56] because Philadelphia was more centrally located, served as Whitefield's base of American operations, and received more information on Whitefield, or it may have been because Franklin was a better newsman than his contemporaries, realizing Whitefield was current news of immense interest to readers. All three reasons are probably true.

Whenever possible during 1740—which was usually weekly—the *Pennsylvania Gazette* issued announcements about Whitefield that told where the revivalist was currently preaching, the number of people who heard him, the amount of money that had been raised for the proposed orphanage in Savannah, and his itinerary for the upcoming days. Typical of those news items was one that appeared in April 1740. It said:

> The middle of last Month the Rev. Mr. WHITEFIELD was at Charleston, and preached there five Times, and collected at one Sermon Seventy Pounds

> Sterling, for the Benefit of the Orphan-House in Georgia; And on Sunday last . . . he landed at New-Castle, where he preached Morning and Evening. On Monday Morning he preach'd to about 3000 at Wilmington, and in the Evening arrived in this City: on Tuesday Evening he preach'd to about 8000 on Society-Hill. . . . Tomorrow Morning he preaches at Whitemarsh, and in the Evening at Germantown.[57]

The numbers of people who heard Whitefield preach at one time may have been the most remarkable of the news about the 1740 preaching tour. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported that fifteen thousand heard Whitefield's farewell sermon in New York,[58] while the *New-England Weekly Journal* put the number in attendance at Whitefield's farewell discourse on Boston's common at 23,000.[59] Franklin, after attending one Whitefield's outdoor revivals, estimated that more than thirty thousand could have heard Whitefield speak at any one time because of his powerful voice.[60] Such extraordinary claims for those who heard Whitefield preach were challenged by his adversaries. An angry writer to the *Pennsylvania Gazette* charged that the number of people reported attending a Whitefield sermon "are always exaggerated, being often doubled and sometimes trebled."[61] A letter from Charleston that ran in the *New-York Weekly Journal* said that many of the reports of Whitefield's preaching that had come from South Carolina were lies because the itinerant was in meetings with members of the Anglican church when he was reported to have been traveling the colony preaching.[62] Not only were the numbers in attendance and the amount of times that Whitefield had preached lies, letter writers said, but so, too, was much that Whitefield had to say. An angry writer to the *South-Carolina Gazette* insisted that Whitefield was nothing more than a liar out for his own gain.[63]

The issue of how many people actually heard Whitefield preach was but a small part of the controversy surrounding the itinerant preacher in 1740 that found its way into colonial newspapers. Whitefield, the *South-Carolina Gazette* reported, angered Anglicans in South Carolina when the visiting preacher, himself a Church of England minister, refused to use the

Church's liturgy to conduct services,[64] something Whitefield also did when passing through Virginia.[65] Whitefield further alienated Anglicans by attacking Archbishop John Tillotson, whose preaching and theology were greatly copied by English preachers in the eighteenth century. Whitefield charged that the Archbishop, who died in 1694, knew no more about Christianity than Mahommed.[66] These charges led to Whitefield being banned from the Anglican pulpit in Philadelphia,[67] something no newspaper reported. Whitefield alienated large numbers of Southerners when he issued a letter "to the Inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina" calling their practice of owning slaves a sin against God.[68]

In May 1740, the validity of the news surrounding Whitefield was again brought into question. A news item in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported:

> Since Mr. Whitefield's Preaching here, the Dancing School, Assembly and Concert Room have been shut up, as inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Gospel: An though the Gentleman concern'd caus'd the Door to be broke open again, we are inform'd that no Company came the last Assembly Night.[69]

The next week, a letter appeared accusing William Seward, Whitefield's traveling companion, of sealing the doors and writing the news item to further Whitefield's purposes on return to England. The biting letter charged that Seward

> shut up the Door of the Concert Room . . . on the 16th of April. No one can wonder at his low Craft, in getting this Paragraph foisted into the News Papers just before his Departure for England, in order to carry it along with him, and spread his Master's Fame. . . . Nor is this the only Instance of Misrepresentation in Favour of Mr. Whitefield's Success. . . . And considering that these Accounts are said to be put in the Papers by themselves, are they not a further Specimen of their little Regard to Truth? Nay, are they not a Demonstration that these Men have other Designs in View than are agreeable to their Pre-tenses?[70]

The controversy in Philadelphia continued throughout May with Franklin himself getting into the fray and admitting that he inserted the news item on Whitefield at the insistence of Seward. Franklin even admitted that the story may not have been true:

> In my last at the Request of Mr. Seward, I inserted an Article of News, relating to the shutting up of the Concert Room, &c . . . for tho' the Article allow'd to

> be literally true, yet by the Manner of Expression 'tis thought to insinuate something that is not, viz. That the Gentlemen forbore meeting in the Night mentioned, thinking such Entertainments inconsistent with the Doctrine of the Gospel.[71]

The controversy over the dance hall also appeared in newspapers in Boston[72] and Charleston.[73]

The concert hall controversy produced negative publicity for Whitefield but nothing like the turmoil and trouble that awaited the twenty-five-year-old preacher in Boston. Whitefield arrived in Boston on September 18 and immediately began to preach in the churches and common areas of the Massachusetts city.[74] A week later, an afternoon sermon was planned for the Reverend Mr. Checkley's meeting house. Instead of hearing a sermon, the people were greeted with tragedy, and newspapers all over colonial America picked up the report, described in vivid detail by Thomas Fleet in the *Boston Evening-Post*:

> Last Monday about Four O'Clock after Noon, a most melancholy and surprising Accident happen'd here, viz. The Rev. Mr. Whitefield being to preach in the Rev. Mr. Checkley's Meeting-House, the People crowded so thick into it, that before the Time of Mr. Whitefield's coming, the Galleries were so thronged, that many People apprehended some Danger of their falling; and being thus preposses'd with Fear, and a Board on which several People stood, breaking, the Word was soon given by some ignorant and disorderly persons, that the Galleries gave Way; upon which the whole Congregation was immediately thrown into the utmost Confusion and Disorder, and each one being desirous to save themselves, some jump'd from the Galleries into the Pews and Allies below, other threw themselves out at the Windows, and those below pressing hard to get out at the Porch Doors, many (especially women) were thrown down and trod upon by those that were crowding out, no Regard had to the terrible Screeches and Outcries of those in Danger of their Lives, or other; so that a great Number were sore wounded and bruised, and many had their Bones broke: Two married Women, viz. Mrs. Story and Mrs. Ingersole, and Servant Lad were so crush'd that they died a few Minutes after.[75]

Fleet followed the news item with an acerbic editorial comment, "And this morning the Rev. Mr. Whitefield set out on his Progress to the Eastward, so that the Town is in a hopeful Way of being restor'd to its former State of Order, Peace and Industry."[76] Fleet's comment about Whitefield's unsettling ways brought an attack printed in the next edition of the *Boston Weekly News-Letter*,[77] to which Fleet responded in his next edition by saying he meant no disrespect to Whitefield.[78] Regardless of Fleet's intention, the war between pro- and anti-Whitefield forces was now in full force in Boston, and no doubt the anti-Whitefield forces were fueled by the preacher's seeming lack of concern for those killed in the Checkley incident that was made known when Whitefield's *Journal* was printed and made available to the public.[79]

The controversy in Boston escalated again in 1745 when Whitefield returned, and the anti-Whitefield elements continued to find an open line of communication through the *Boston Evening-Post*.[80] The *Evening-Post* reported that a concerted effort was being made in Boston to keep Whitefield out of the pulpits of local churches. "Last Friday Evening," the paper informed its readers, "Mr. Whitefield preach'd the Lecture at the Old-South Meeting-House for Mr. Prince, notwithstanding his Promise not to invite Mr. Whitefield into his Pulpit. . . . We hear that a Man at Topsfield has lately been presented for breaking into the Meeting House . . . and letting in Mr. Whitefield."[81] Other newspapers, like the *Boston Gazette*, defended Whitefield against the negative news that they had "seen in the Evening-Post."[82]

One of the great controversies surrounding Whitefield in 1745 centered on the dividing of religious groups, something that was blamed on him in colonial newspapers by letter writers and was the reason why so many churches closed their doors to the itinerant preacher. A writer to the *Boston Evening-Post* said "that Mr. Whitefield has been the great Instrument of causing the Divisions and Separations which have disturbed and rent in Pieces so many of the Churches of this Land." Another writer, whose letter appeared in the same edition, said that neither Whitefield or any "New-Light" that followed him was "a true Christian." And a final letter writer in the *Evening-Post* noted that Whitefield's use of meeting houses helped divide the people and proved that Whitefield would lie to achieve his purposes.[83]

By August 1745, the *Boston Evening-Post* noted that the religious controversy in New England had subsided a great deal.[84] The reason for the easing of tensions rested on the fact that Whitefield had left for Philadelphia.[85] With the end of 1745 and Whitefield's impending return to England, the great religious controversies surrounding him subsided in America. Whitefield returned to the colonies again in 1747, 1751, 1755, 1765, and 1770, but no great controversy surrounding the minister occurred during those preaching tours that took place during the years of this study, although newspapers reported on Whitefield's presence and his preaching during each of those revival tours.[86]

Whitefield did make one more tremendous splash across the pages of colonial newspapers, but it took his death to accomplish that feat. The orator, who had come to America as a bold twenty-five-year-old spark plug, was now sixty-five. Asthma continually bothered him, and after a prayer session in Newbury-Port, Massachusetts, he retired to his room, opened the window to get a bit of air, sat down, and died. The same newspaper that had been Whitefield's great nemesis in 1745, the *Boston Evening-Post*, proclaimed:

> It is questionable whether any one since the days of the Apostles, or even they, had more hearers, he having delivered above seventeen thousand Discourses, to five, ten, fifteen, & twenty thousand persons at a time, both in Europe & America.--He kept up his zeal and popularity to the last discourse, which he delivered the day before before his death to an audience of at least six thousand in open air. . . . He seem'd to have a clear view of the entertainments of another life; and would commonly converse so familiarly of death, as tho' he was a kind friend he was waiting for, and even long'd to receive the summons; and was unwilling to tarry here any longer than he could be serviceable to mankind.---Such was the character of the Person whose departure we lament.[87]

At least fifteen thousand people, the *Connecticut Journal* reported, attended Whitefield's funeral,[88] and his obituary ran in papers throughout colonial America.[89]

By the end of Whitefield's thirty-year preaching affair with America, everyone in the colonies knew of the man and his ministry. The face of religion had changed in America during the period of Whitefield's relation with the colonies. Whitefield believed strongly in a free conscience in worshipping God, and his preaching no doubt helped to strengthen the concept of religious liberty in America.

Religious liberty. The colonial record of religious liberty as found in newspapers makes it obvious that religious liberty and toleration of various sects were relative concepts thoughout much of eighteenth-century America. As the writer to the *Providence Gazette* pointed out in 1770, some colonies claimed that the free choice of religion was available to all of its citizens, but in reality, the people of the colony were forced to support a state church or risk the loss of their personal property.[90] The treatment of Roman Catholics is also a prime example that talk of religious liberty and its application were understood in terms of Protestants only. Few people in colonial America believed in religious liberty in the manner of Roger Williams who advocated complete religious freedom for Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Moslims, and even atheists.[91] Most Americans, instead, believed as Williams' contemporary John Milton did. "This is more Christian," Milton wrote in *Areopagetica*, "that many be tolerated, rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated popery and open superstition, which, as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate."[92] Milton placed limits upon religious toleration, and so did most colonial Americans. There was a continual suppression of new religious groups and ideas throughout the colonial period, according to newspapers.

Despite the fact that intolerance existed, the acceptance of liberty of conscience in colonial America did make inroads, and the move toward the freedom of religion later found in the Constitution's First Amendment is chronicled in the acts of colonies and religious groups in colonial newspapers. The fact that news articles about the suppression and intolerance of groups such as Catholics and Methodists ran concurrently with articles calling for religious liberty and with reports of acts of freedom of conscience supported by colonial governments only confirms the fact that the concept of complete separation of church and state was an evolving process, one that did not reach full maturity in the colonial period.

Intolerance was a by-product of fear and misunderstanding and as has been seen in the case of Roman Catholics produced an almost universal call for the suppression of free worship in colonial America so long as "papists" were involved. But colonial newspapers ran articles that demonstrated that Protestants in America were often intolerant of other Protestants as well. This intolerance occurred because all religious groups viewed one another through a strict "conception of true Christianity" that generally disavowed the validity of any other understanding of true Christianity.[93] Considering this fact, it is remarkable that any religious toleration ever was granted during the colonial period.

The strong theological lens through which various religious groups viewed life led to numerous confrontations, which were aimed at suppression. Anglicans attacked Presbyterians in 1707, the *Boston News-Letter* reported.[94] In Providence, Presbyterians were the target of an attack upon their meeting house in 1725. Just who the perpetraitors were was not known by the correspondent who reported the event, but whoever sought to stop the Presbyterians did so by putting "a stinking Sturgeon of about 8 Foot in Length" in the pulpit during the middle of the week. The rotting fish successfully ended the Presbyterian worship for the week because "it was so much corrupted and putrified, that it swarm'd with Vermine, and caused such a nausious Stench, that the People could not assemble in the Meeting House."[95] Quakers disrupted an Anglican service in Boston, and a Quaker minister—one Anne Flower—refused to let the Anglican minister speak, insinuating that he and his religion did not possess the true spirit.[96] And Congregationalists in New England suppressed the religion of Baptists[97] and Quakers.[98]

Other than the extremely strong aversion for Catholics, Methodists appeared to be the most detested religious group during the colonial period, according to colonial newspapers. The dislike for Methodism may have grown from the fact that John and Charles Wesley's method called for a change within the Anglican church, and religious beliefs that challenge or alter current practices generally evoke hostility. It may have stemmed from the ties between the Wesleys and George Whitefield, whose own evangelical system was highly disliked by many churchmen. Whatever the reason, Methodism added yet another lens for theological understanding in the eighteenth century, and as a new form of Protestantism it raised the ire of many other groups.

Methodism's formative period, 1738-1744, coincided with the Great Awakening in America,[99] and attacks upon the Wesleyan movement began during this period. Riots took place in London, a 1740 newspaper report stated, after one Methodist called the Anglican church "the Scarlet Whore, prophesied of in the Revelations."[100] Usually, however, the news reports on Methodists categorized them as foolish in matters of religion or as disrupters of the commonweal. The *New-York Weekly Journal* reported that the Methodist message had ruined the woolen industry in London.[101] A Methodist minister in Charleston was jailed for laying "dangerous Plots against this Province," the *South-Carolina Gazette* noted.[102] Methodists were often made to look foolish in papers,[103] and an *Essex Gazette* news story intimated that a convert had fallen prey to a demonic evil in order to accomplish the Methodist conversion.[104]

Even though little tolerance appeared to be shown for Methodists and some other religious groups, newspapers indicated that religious freedom was indeed making inroads in America. A strong statement on the concept of freedom of conscience appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1730. The essay stated:

> Every Man has a Right, a divine Right to interpret for himself. . . . If you consider what terrible Work the different Sentiments about the Meaning of

> certain texts have occasioned; how piously Christians, as they have affected to call themselves, have cut one anothers Throats by Turns, about hard words, and Sounds without Sense; if you consider, for how many Ages the most absurd Tenets have been forced upon mankind, and all who could not believe, or were not wicked enough to say they believed were burnt here, and doomed to eternal Flames hereafter. . . . A Spirit of liberty is growing amonst us.[105]

Toleration did make gains in the colonies during the middle third of the eighteenth century, and newspapers reported these small victories along the path to religious liberty. Jews were granted religious toleration in Pennsylvania in 1740.[106] Quakers, who had been hanged in Massachusetts a century earlier, applied to the Boston selectmen for the use of Faneuil Hall for a meeting. The request was granted according to a newspaper account, and both the positive response to the request and the sermon preached met "the Satisfaction of People of all Denominations."[107]

The final push for religious liberty prior to the Revolution came from Baptists, who never gained full liberty of conscience during the colonial period, at least in New England. Baptists, under the guidance of Issac Backus, mounted a political campaign against paying support for churches in Massachusetts. Backus, recalling the writings of his Baptist forefather Roger Williams, sought a complete separation of church and state.[108] In 1770, an announcement that appeared in the *Providence Gazette*, presented the Baptists' plan for ending the Massachusetts Bay system of taxes to support churches.[109]

By carrying essays on religious toleration and reports on the efforts of some religious groups to establish complete religious liberty in America, colonial newspapers demonstrated that sensitivity to the religious beliefs of others was slowly becoming a part of colonial life. In printing part of the proceedings of the Continental Congress in 1775, the *Essex Journal* related a debate in that body over religious beliefs and how the new government could be sensitive to those beliefs and still begin a war. The congressional debate declared:

> As there are some people, who from religious principles cannot bear arms in any case, this Congress intend no violence to their consciences, but earnestly recommend it to them to contribute liberally in this time of universal calamity to the relief of their distressed brethren in the several colonies, and to do all other services to their oppressed country, which they can consistent with their religious principles.[110]

Intolerance and tolerance stood juxtaposed in colonial newspapers and in the mindset of colonial citizens. Even though religious tolerance was not yet the law of the land, newspapers present a portrait of a people torn between upholding their own beliefs, which they were certain were correct, and allowing others to espouse a religious position to which they could not agree.

Conclusion

Religion was an important subject to Americans of the colonial period, as the religious news in colonial newspapers demonstrates. Religious implications were applied to news of war and natural disasters. Sermons, ordination notices, and hymns appeared regularly on the pages of newspapers. News concerning George Whitefield and the religious controversy surrounding him captured the attention of colonial newspapers like news of no other individual in the colonial period, and the religious news of colonial newspapers increased in the Middle and Southern colonies in 1740 and in New England in 1745 in direct relation to Whitefield's visits to those colonies. Neither the Stamp Act crisis nor any other political controversy for that matter ever completely eradicated religious news from newspapers, and newspapers from 1730 on provided a forum for arguments for and against religious liberty.

But does news of religious controversy and individuals such as George Whitefield support the concept that religion was so pervasive in colonial America that it was the foundation of everything, including all the news? The answer is no, but the negative response must be qualified. Issues of religious liberty, God's providence, and countless insertions of hymns, religious poems, sermons, and scripture were not the only ways in which religion entered the news of colonial newspapers. Every type of news reported in papers contained some religious elements. Ship captains, for example, gave God credit for rescuing them from a tumultuous ocean,[111] and providence ensured death at sea as well.[112] Crime in early colonial America equaled sin,[113] and it was God's providence that provided an inoculation for smallpox and other diseases.[114]

Considering eighteenth-century religion's role in so much of news, it is safe to say that God permeated the thoughts and discussions of almost all subjects of news in colonial newspapers, but religious implications were not present in all news stories. This omission of religion explains the qualified no for religion's role in all news. It would also probably be safe to say that religion affected a reader's understanding of almost every piece of news, even if there were no overt religious references in it.

Religion, according to newspapers, was a vital part of colonial life. Most Americans viewed a relationship with God as important to their well-being, and newspaper stories intimated that God's providence would be there to protect a person if one was in a proper relation with God. The phenomenon of George Whitefield also supports the value and importance of religion. News about Whitefield was like news of no other person or event prior to 1740. Whitefield attained "star status," something he never relinquished in America for thirty years, and news of him demonstrates how one individual or event could capture the media's attention.

One could say, as Deborah Franklin did, that news about Whitefield was found in all the papers, but that would also be true of religion in general. Religion was vital to the lives of most colonial citizens, and newspapers provided reports of religious controversy and presented news tinted by religious belief throughout the colonial period.

ENDNOTES

1. *Providence Gazette; and Country Journal*, 13 October 1770, 2.

2. Oscar Theodore Barck, Jr. and Hugh Talmage Lefler, *Colonial America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), 379.

3. Richard Beale Davis, *A Colonial Southern Bookshelf: Readings in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979), 75-90.

4. David D. Hall, "Religion and Society: Problems and Reconsiderations," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Period*, eds. Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University, 1984), 322.

5. Patricia U. Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3.

6. During the colonial period, printers published approximately 36,000 weekly, biweekly and triweekly editions of newspapers. Because of the large number of newspapers in existence, a method was devised for this study that would provide comprehensive coverage of all colonial newspapers while holding the number of editions that needed to be read to a manageable number. All extant editions prior to 1720 were read, and from 1720-1775, newspapers were read in five-year increments—1720, 1725, and so on. Every extant and available newspaper edition printed in the study years from 1720-1755 was read. From 1760-1775, the large number of newspapers and total editions printed during each of the study years necessitated using a method of sampling. A method of selecting newspapers for these years was devised that ensured a low margin of error, less than 4 percent, meaning that less than four chances in one hundred existed for missing a news item dealing with religion. More than two thousand newspapers were read for the years 1760-1775 or between 500-600 for each year of the study. Even though sampling occurred in selecting years for this study and newspapers to be read from 1760-1775, sampling was not involved in the reading of the newspapers. Sampling figures based on Donald P. Warwick and Charles A. Lininger, *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), 93.

7. Ibid., 6-10. Cedric B. Cowing, *The Great Awakening and the American Revolution: Colonial Thought in the 18th Century* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971), 178-225. Bonomi and Cowing believe that from the Great Awakening on, religion played a larger and larger role in American political thought and shaped America's effort at revolution. Works that have looked at newspapers' role in the revolutionary process, however, do not point to an overt religiosity in news articles. See Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain 1764-1776* (New York: Random House, 1957); and Edmund S. Morgan and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953).

8. Charles E. Clark, "The Newspapers of Colonial America," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 100 (1990): 382. Clark draws this conclusion but offers no tangible examples to support the claim.

9. Exactly why the issue of religious liberty was not discussed to any great extent prior to 1730 may be explained by the fact that few newspapers existed prior to that time. Of the newspapers being printed prior to 1730, all except the *American Weekly Mercury*, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, and *New-York Gazette* were printed in Boston, probably the most religiously controlled city of the colonies. Calls for religious liberty in Boston would obviously have been seen as libelous publications. Religious liberty, on the other hand, was a basic part of the chartering of Pennsylvania, and the pluralistic nature of New York, which was a cultural mixture of continental European and English settlers by the eighteenth century, was never as concerned about religious issues as were New Englanders.

10. *Boston News-Letter*, 24 April 1704, 1.

11. Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven*, 14-15.

12. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 22 May 1750, 1.

13. David Paul Nord, "Teleology and the News: The Religious Roots of American Journalism, 1630-1730," *Journal of Americn History* 77 (1990): 36.

14. Paul L. Hughes and Robert F. Fries, *Crown and Parliament in Tudor-Stuart England: A Documentary Constitutional History, 1485-1714* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1959), 333; G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England: From Utrecht to Modem Times*, 3rd ed. (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1952), 45-46; and J. P. Kenyon, *Stuart England* (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 243.

15. *Boston News-Letter*, 24 April 1704, 1.

16. After attempts at attaining the crown by James III failed, his son, Charles III, continued the battle to return the Stuarts to the throne of England. Their efforts failed, and the Hanoverian line, begun by the German George I in 1715, continued throughout the colonial period.

17. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 1 April 1725, 2.

18. Ibid., 22 April 1725, 1.

19. See, for example, Ibid., 1 July 1725, 1; *Boston Evening-Post*, 4 March 1745, 2;

20. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 19 June 1740, 2.

21. The *South-Carolina Gazette* ran numerous articles on Spanish attacks, troop build-ups, and the strengthening of fortifications surrounding Charleston and parts of Georgia during 1740. See, for example, 26 January 1740, 2; 4 April 1740, 1; 24 May 1740, 2; 1 July 1740, 2; 1 August 1740, 3; and 6 September 1740, 2.

22. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 16 October 1740, 1.

23. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 6 June 1745, 3; *New-York Evening-Post*, 9 December 1745, 2; *Pennsylvania Journal, or Weekly Advertiser*

(Philadelphia), 27 February 1750, 1; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 28 February 1750, 1; and *Boston Evening-Post*, 23 April 1750, 2; 9 June 1755, 2.

24. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 31 July 1755, 2 (emphasis included).

25. Many newspapers listed the number of infants baptized each week. The *Boston Gazette*, for example, published the number baptized each week through 1770. Ordinations of ministers appeared constantly throughout the period in most papers but especially in the Boston newspapers. See, for examples, *Boston Gazette*, 2 November 1730, 2; *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 11 February 1755, 3; and *Boston Gazette, and Country Journal*, 3 September 1770, 3.

26. Patricia U. Bonomi and Peter R. Eisenstadt, "Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-Century British American Colonies," *William and Mary Quarterly* 39 (1982): 245-86, cited in Bonomi, *Under the Cope of Heaven*, 220.

27. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 16 October 1735, 2.

28. Ibid., 28 May 1730, 3; and *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg, Dixon and Hunter), 23 December 1775, 4.

29. *Pennsylvania Journal, or Weekly Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 19 September 1745, 3.

30. *Parker's New-York Gazette; or the Weekly Post-Boy*, 24 December 1760, 3.

31. *Story & Humphrey's Pennsylvania Mercury; and the Universal Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 20 October 1775, 1.

32. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 16 July 1730, 1.

33. *Boston Gazette*, 13 January 1734-35, 3.

34. See, for example, *Boston News-Letter*, 24 April 1704, 2 and *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 18 September 1740, 3.

35. *Providence Gazette; and Country Journal*, 12 May 1770, 1 (emphasis included).

36. *Dunlap's Maryland Gazette; or the Baltimore General Advertiser*, 25 July 1775, 1.

37. *Boston Evening-Post*, 1 December 1735, 2.

38. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 22 October 1730, 1 (emphasis included).

39. *Boston News-Letter*, 19 March 1705, 1 (emphasis included).

40. *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 25 January 1775, 4 (emphasis included).

41. *Cape Fear Mercury* (Wilmington), 28 July 1775, 2 (emphasis included). The examples of such calls issued in colonial newspapers are extensive. Governments, for example, called for

days of prayer for relief from Native Americans and disease, *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 12 April 1760, 1; to gain assistance in war, *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 6 February 1755, 3; and to show appreciation for successfully surviving another year, *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 2 November 1730, 1.

42. *Publick Occurrences* (Boston), 25 September 1690, 1.

43. Numerous examples of beliefs in supernatural occurrences in colonial America exist. Many are discussed in David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Fischer discusses these under the term "magic ways."

44. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 12 June 1755, 1.

45. *Boston Gazette*, 3 February 1735, 3.

46. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 22 May 1750, 1.

47. *Boston Gazette*, 24 November 1725, 1 (emphasis included).

48. *Boston Gazette, or Country Journal*, 1 December 1755, 1.

49. J. D. Douglas, ed. *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), s. v. "Deism," by J. W. Charley; and Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America* (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1976), 122-23. The best example used to explain deism comes from the fourteenth century. God is portrayed as a clock-maker who creates a watch, winds it up, and then leaves it to run on its own.

50. Quoted in Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 286.

51. Ibid., xiii-xiv.

52. David A. Copeland, "Covering the Big Story: George Whitefield's First Preaching Tour, News Manipulation, and the Colonial Press," Paper presented at the American Journalism Historians Association annual convention, Lawrence, Kansas, 1992, 13-14. The activities of Seward on the part of Whitefield are also discussed in Frank Lambert, "'Pedlar of Divinity': George Whitefield and the Great Awakening," *Journal of American History* 77 (1990): 835; and Stout, *The Divine Dramatist*, 77.

53. Harry S. Stout, *The New England Soul: Preaching and Religious Culture in Colonial New England* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 193-194.

54. Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* (1810, reprint, New York: Weathervane Books, 1970), 568.

55. Figures taken from the bibliographic listings in Charles Evans, *American Bibliography* (Chicago, 1904), 2:109-326; and Roger P. Bristol, *Supplement to Charles Evans' American Bibliography* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1970), 58-78.

56. Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin.* Eds. J. A. Leo Lemay and P. M. Zall (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 105-06.

57. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 17 April 1740, 3.

58. Ibid., 23 October 1740, 2.

59. *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 14 October 1740, 2.

60. Franklin, *Autobiography*, 107.

61. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 1 May 1740, 1. The numbers that were listed in newspapers for those in attendance at a Whitefield sermon could only be estimated, and the numbers in colonial newspapers, Whitefield's *Journals*, and in the diary of Whitefield's traveling public relations man, William Seward, do not always agree. See Copeland, "Covering the Big Story," 15-17.

62. *New-York Weekly Journal*, 25 August 1740, 2.

63. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 9 October 1740, 1.

64. Ibid., 21 August 1740, 3.

65. *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), 18 January 1740, 1.

66. "A Letter from the Rev. Mr. WHITEFIELD, at Georgia, to a Friend in London," *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 10 April 1740, 1; and *New-York Gazette*, 19 May 1740, 1.

67. George Whitefield, *Journals, 1737-1741*, with an introduction by William V. Davis (Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimilies & Reprints, 1969), 404.

68. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 17 April 1740, 1. The letter was also printed and distributed throughout the colonies.

69. Ibid., 1 May 1740, 3.

70. Ibid., 8 May 1740, 2.

71. Ibid. For more on the dance hall controversy, see, J. A. Leo Lemay, *The Canon of Benjamin Franklin, 1722-1776* (Newwark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), 96-103.

72. *Boston Evening-Post*, 12 May 1740, 4.

73. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 18 July 1740, 3.

74. *Boston Evening-Post*, 22 September 1740, 2; *Boston Gazette* 22 September 1740, 2; *Boston News-Letter*, 25 September 1740, 2; *Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, 22 September 1740, 3; and *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 23 September 1740, 2.

75. *Boston Evening-Post*, 29 September 1740, 2. The report of the tragedy also appeared in the following newspapers: *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 9 October 1740, 2; *Boston News-Letter*, 25 September 1740, 2; *New-York Weekly Journal*, 13 October 1740, 3; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 9 October 1740, 2; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 6 November 1740, 3. The *Boston News-Letter*'s account of the Checkley incident was written leaving out such editorial comments as "some ignorant and disorderly persons" and that those crowding out had "no Regard" for those that were being injured. The *New-England Weekly Journal* declined to even mention the incident, and issues of the *Boston Weekly Post-Boy* are not extant for the week of September 29 through the rest of 1740.

76. Ibid.

77. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 2 October 1740, 1.

78. *Boston Evening-Post*, 6 October 1740, 2.

79. In his journal, Whitefield gave his account of what happened at Rev. Checkley's church. Then without any mention of sorrow, he said, "God was pleased to give me presence of mind; so that I gave notice I would immediately preach upon the common. The weather was wet, but many thousands followed into the field." Whitefield, *Journals*, 462.

80. Fleet's dislike of Whitefield was fueled, in addition to the incident in the Checkley church, by his personal aversion to ministers. Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 94, reports that Fleet's dislike for the clergy necessitated his emigration from England after he exhibited a display of contempt for the Church of England in 1711.

81. *Boston Evening-Post*, 8 April 1745, 2.

82. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 8 January 1745, 1. The *Gazette* carried negative news on Whitefield on page one as well.

83. *Boston Evening-Post*, 11 March 1745, 1, 2.

84. Ibid., 12 August 1745, 1.

85. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 12 September 1745, 2.

86. Many examples exist in colonial newspapers of news items concerning each of these preaching tours. Examples of news about Whitefield and his preaching tours that took place in the years of this study may be found in the following: *Connecticut Gazette* (New Haven), 19 April 1755, 3, Whitefield leaves Charleston for England; *Georgia Gazette* (Savannah), 9 May 1765, 4, Whitefield arrives in Georgia; and *South-Carolina and American General Gazette* (Charleston), 18 July 1770, 2, Whitefield preaches to the student body at Princetown.

87. *Boston Evening-Post*, 8 October 1770, 3.

88. *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 26 October 1770, 2.

89. Whitefield's obituary or a news story about his death appeared in the following: *Boston Gazette, and Country Journal*, 8 October 1770, 2; *Massachusetts Gazette* (Boston), 11 October 1770, 4; *Green & Russell's Boston Post-Boy & Advertiser*, 8 October 1770, 2; *Connecticut Courant* (Hartford), 9 October 1770, 2; *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 26 October 1770, 2; *Essex Gazette* (Salem, Mass.), 9 October 1770, 3; *New-York Journal; or the General Advertiser*, 11 October 1770, 3; *Massachusetts Spy* (Boston), 9 October 1770, 2; *New-London Gazette*, 12 October 1770, 3; *New-York Gazette; and the Weekly Mercury*, 8 October 1770, 2; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 11 October 1770, 3; *Pennsylvania Journal, or Weekly Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 11 October 1770, 3; *South-Carolina and American General Gazette* (Charleston), 23 October 1770, 2; *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 8 November 1770, 4; and *South-Carolina Gazette; and Country Journal* (Charleston), 6 November 1770, 2.

90. *Providence Gazette; and Country Journal*, 13 October 1770, 2.

91. Roger Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience Discussed in a Conference between Peace and Truth* (London, 1644), 2.

92. John Milton, *Areopagitica: A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England* (London, 1644), 134.

93. J. Sears McGee, *The Godly Man in Stuart England: Anglicans, Puritans, and the Two Tables, 1620-1670* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976), 2.

94. *Boston News-Letter*, 25 August 1707, 2.

95. *New-England Courant* (Boston), 10 July 1725, 2; and *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 22 July 1725, 3.

96. *Boston Evening-Post*, 15 December 1735, 1.

97. *Pennsylvania Chronicle, and Universal Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 19 March 1770, 1.

98. *New-York Weekly Journal*, 12 May 1740, 2.

99. Frederick A. Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism: A History of the United Methodists and Their Relations* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 32.

100. *Boston Evening-Post*, 10 November 1740, 2.

101. *New-York Weekly Journal*, 31 March 1740, 4.

102. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 13 May 1745, 2.

103. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 2 August 1750, 1; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 22 August 1750, 3; and *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 31 January 1765, 1.

104. *Essex Gazette* (Salem, Mass.), 6 February 1770, 2. The same news item also appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg, Rind), 8 March 1770, 2.

105. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 30 July 1730, 2. A similar essay appeared in the *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 25 June 1730, 1.

106. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 17 July 1740, 1.

107. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 21 August 1755, 3.

108. H. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1987), 255-65. A complete discussion of Baptists and religious liberty may be found in William R. Estep, *Revolution Within the Revolution: The First Amendment in Historical Context, 1612-1789* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1990).

109. *Providence Gazette; and Country Journal*, 11 August 1770, 3. Other newspapers and writers to them supported Baptist efforts from 1770 on. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Chronicle, and Universal Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 19 March 1770, 1; and *Essex Journal: or, the New-Hampshire Packet* (Newbury-Port, Mass.), 18 August 1775, 2 It should be noted that Baptists' efforts to completely separate church and state relations in Massachusetts were not completely successful. In fact, it was not until 1833 that Massachusetts removed completely the concept of an established religion from its state constitution.

110. *Essex Journal: or, the New-Hampshire Packet* (Newbury-Port, Mass.), 18 August 1775, 2.

111. *Boston Evening-Post*, 13 October 1755, 2.

112. Ibid., 23 June 1760, 2.

113. Samuel Walker, *Popular Justice: A History of American Criminal Justice* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 13. Newspapers often discussed the past sins of criminals, *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 17 May 1745, 4, and based executions on biblical injunctions, *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 6 July 1770, 3.

114. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 19 August 1725, 2; and *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 1 January 1740, 3.

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And So They Came:
The Persuasive Effect of American Settlement Literature during the Colonial Era

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Abstract for

And So They Came: The Persuasive Effect of American Settlement Literature during the Colonial Era

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During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, America was open for settlement by Europeans. Although America was promoted in speech, sermon, rumor, letter, and ordinary word-of-mouth, settlement entrepreneurs who wanted to reach large audiences turned to the only true mass medium of the day -- the printed word -- to issue an appeal for immigrants. The press of the era painted America in alluring, enticing, nearly irresistible colors. Although most scholars assume the persuasive literature was a success in inducing settlement, few have examined historical statements about the actual influence of the persuasive settlement media. This study shows that European immigrants were, indeed, convinced to cross the ocean on the basis of pamphlets, newspaper articles, tracts, and books about America. The printed works were sometimes truthful and often exaggerated -- and usually, highly successful in achieving their goal.

And So They Came: The Persuasive Effect of American Settlement Literature during the Colonial Era

Ah, America -- even in 1624, it was the land of opportunity. Think of it! The immigrating European farmer could expect to loll about and do nothing all day, for American corn grew into fine, thick rows without the first hint of help from man; and in fact, corn even sprang, like fruit, from trees. As knowledgeable people could attest, American corn grew in such bumper crops that the eager immigrant could smell it from sea long before spotting land. Added to that deliriously delicious fact was the wonder of American game. Why, the hunter had to expend almost *no* effort to feed his family! The deer came when they were called; and then the poor, stupid creatures just stood there, waiting to be shot. They were American deer, after all, and had never seen men or guns before and didn't know any better. The fish did their part, too; the tasty creatures obediently leaped into the kettle on command or swam voluntarily onto dry ground, free for the taking. There were so very many fish in American waters that the newcomer could dip them up by the basketful on the shore of any river. That was nice, of course, but far better than any of that was the fact that in America, the very birds presented themselves to the hunter with spits already through them. America was, indeed, a magical place![1]

As ludicrous as those claims were, a seasoned American trader in 1624 was forced to publish a pamphlet to assure gullible European readers that those claims and others like them were not true, even if they had appeared in print, manuscript, speech, or rumor.

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[1] From a description by Christopher Levett, *My Discouery of divers Riuers and Harbours* (1628) reprinted in George Parker Winship, ed., *Sailors' Narratives of Voyages along the New England Coast, 1524-1624* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), pp. 282, 286-287. Levett wrote the work in 1624, but it was not published until 1628, according to Winship. Levett published his document to refute the outlandish claims given here -- and he said he was concerned because readers and hearers of such falsehoods were falling for them. Although did not specify the source of false knowledge about America, Levett clearly implicated the mass media of the day as a partner in disseminating the false information. Such fantastic printed material is confirmed by Durand of Dauphiné, Gideon Johnston, and Peter Gordon, below.

NOTE: The title of Levett's work has been shortened here, as will many of the titles of colonial works in this paper. Writers of the era favored extremely long titles, sometimes rambling on for a full page. Thus, this paper will use abbreviated titles from those works. Also, the page numbers given for colonial-era works will refer to the modern editions in which they are reprinted.

People believed those tall tales, falling for them hard enough to plan to move to the new Paradise across the ocean.[2]

Europeans of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were enamored of the strange New World which was weeks away beyond the eastern horizon. They learned of the New World in sermon and rumor, in speeches and gossip, in letter and personal discussion. But those forms of information were small-scale, individual-sized efforts. Promoters who wanted large-scale results in settling America were well convinced that the most effective way to reach a large, far-flung audience was to put promotional information into print. Colonial developers turned to the only true mass medium of the day -- the printed word -- to encourage their settlement schemes in the New World. The printed word was the lure, the promise, the "official" word. The mysterious lands across the Atlantic were alive and beautiful and thrilling and promising in the pages of books and pamphlets and newspapers and tracts. Persuaded at least in part by the print media, many Europeans gained the courage to move to a continent which they had never seen, in all likelihood never to return again. That kind of decision could not be made lightly or on a whim. It had to be made on the concrete evidence of others, and such evidence was embodied in the printed word.

Literature Review

The persuasive literature which encouraged settlement in America forms an important segment of early media related to America, but unfortunately that literature is something of a neglected stepchild in the chronicle of American media history. Perhaps that is because the literature was only rarely published in America -- mostly it sprang from overseas presses. Yet, despite its distant origin, it is intimately tied with American history and left a deep, unerasable impression.

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[2] Ibid.

Scholarship which touches on early American immigration literature tends to revolve around the great men who produced the works. The best in-depth studies on the immigration phenomenon have been biographies. In that category, scholars have carefully examined the lives of great colonial promoters, such as the two Richard Hakluyts; Samuel Purchas; and the team of Theodore de Bry, John White, and Thomas Hariot. By using a biographical format focusing on authors, however, they have naturally been unable to explore deeply the effect of the pamphlets, tracts, and books on average readers.

For example, George Bruner Parks' excellent biography of colonial promoter Richard Hakluyt focused on Hakluyt's life and painstaking attempts to spread the gospel of English exploration. Parks dealt in marvellous detail with the work Hakluyt did to publish his famous propagandistic collection of sailors' narratives. Not departing too greatly from Hakluyt's own life, however, Parks could not record the reaction to Hakluyt's books and any resulting settlement.[3] Similarly, a biographical study of colonial promoter Samuel Purchas by Loren E. Pennington assumed that Purchas's work did coax settlers to the New World, but Pennington did not explore that facet of Purchas's books. Instead, he tried to establish the frequently decried Purchas as an important philosopher in the process of American colonization.[4] Paul Hulton's biographical sketch of colonial promoter John White focused not on the persuasive effect of his published sketches, but rather on White's exquisite artistry and his sensitive recording of the New World for European eyes.[5]

Some scholars have indeed lauded promotional literature as important in inducing settlement. However, the lure seems to be an assumption, with little proof offered. Giles Gunn, for example, recognized the importance of European promotional literature, narratives of exploration, and narratives of colonization as tools for populating the

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[3] George Bruner Parks, *Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages*, 2nd edition (New York: Frederick Ungard Publishing Co., 1961).

[4] Loren E. Pennington, "*Hakluytus Posthumus:* Samuel Purchas and the Promotion of English Overseas Expansion," *The Emporia State Research Studies* 14 (March, 1966, no. 3). See especially pp. 11-13.

[5] Paul Hulton, *America 1583: The Complete Drawings of John White* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), pp. 3-38.

American continent. Although he seemed to see the narratives as powerful persuaders, he did not explore the persuasive nature of the narratives in great detail.[6] Likewise, David Freeman Hawke assumed that promotional literature had a big impact on readers, but he did not offer any specific proof.[7] Alan Smith said that a 1563 promotional book actually induced Englishmen to settle in the area that is today the United States, paying less attention to present-day Canada. Again, however, he offered no proof.[8] Alexander S. Salley, Jr., writing about promotional literature of early South Carolina, did offer some interesting statistical connections between one particular piece of promotional literature and subsequent settlement, but he did not dwell on the point in detail.[9]

Scholarship on the subject has only lightly touched the issue of proof when it comes to the effect of promotional literature touting America. Did readers indeed believe what they read in promotional literature about America? Did they really place so much faith in such literature that they left their homelands for a savage and uncivilized continent, knowing they would likely never return again? The historical evidence is there: the literature did have an effect. This study will offer proofs that readers were inspired to action by what they read. In order to understand the proofs which colonial people themselves offered, however, it is first important to illustrate the nature and intent of pro-settlement literature.

The Lure of Words

Richard Hakluyt, an English preacher with a passion for geography, believed with all his faith that printed material would inspire Englishmen to a glorious future based on exploration. He himself had fallen in love with the notion by reading printed material. "I fell to my intended course [of learning about world geography]," he wrote, "and by degrees read over whatsoever printed or written discoveries and voyages I found extant either in the Greeke, Latine, Italian, Spanish, Portugall, French, or English languages . . . ." He lectured publicly on the material and saw to it that common schools became equipped with maps and other geographical aids, much to the pleasure of the scholars. The black mark on such glorious stories, Hakluyt felt, was that Englishmen were well behind their peers in exploration. He decried the English for "their sluggish security."[10] Such feelings of anguish spurred Hakluyt to collect and print a multi-volume set of narratives, letters, and other information from English explorers who went to all parts of the world. Much of the information was persuasive, intending to induce settlement.

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[6] Giles Gunn, ed., *Early American Writing* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994). See especially pp. xv-xvi and xxii-xxiii.

[7] David Freeman Hawke, *Everyday Life in Early America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 3-4, 12-13.

[8] Alan Smith, ed. *Virginia 1584-1607: The First English Settlement in North America* (Boston: Charles T. Branford Co., 1957), pp. xvii. Due to the appearance of works by the colonial writer John Smith in this paper, works in Alan Smith's collection of documents will be cited by the name "Alan Smith," followed by the page number(s).

[9] Alexander S. Salley, Jr., commenting on [Robert Horne ?], *A Brief Description of the Province of Carolina* (London: printed for Robert Horne, 1666), reprinted in Salley's collection, *Narratives of Early Carolina, 1650-1708* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), pp. 65, 72-73.

Philip Amadas was one adventurer-writer who teamed up with Hakluyt to help lure Europeans across the Atlantic to America. As captain of a 1584 expedition financed by Sir Walter Raleigh, Amadas offered a charming description of the abundant paradise of Virginia and the extraordinary kindness of the natives. According to Amadas, for instance, the wife of an Indian king on Roanoke commanded her subjects to look after the English sailors' every whim. Amadas told the tale:

> [S]ome of her people shee commanded to drawe our boat on shore for the beating of the billoe: others she appointed to cary us on their backs to the dry ground, and others to bring our oares into the house for feare of stealing. When we wer come into the utter roome, having five roomes in her house, she caused us to sit downe by a great fire, and after took off our clothes and washed them, and dryed them againe: some of the women plucked off our stockings and washed them, some washed our feete in warm water, and shee herself took great paines to see all things ordered in the best maner shee could, making great haste to dresse some meat for us to eate.[11]

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[10] Richard Hakluyt the younger, *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation* I (originally published between 1589 and 1599; reprinted many times. The edition referred to here is New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1927), p. 2. There were two Richard Hakluyts, an uncle and nephew. Although "the younger" is not a formal part of the author's name, it is included here to distinguish him from his uncle.

[11] Either Amadas or Arthur Barlowe wrote the piece. In modern times, it has been impossible to tell which man wrote it. The Amadas or Barlowe information is from "The first voyage made to the coasts of America," in Hakluyt, VI, pp. 121-132. The quoted material appears on p. 128. For simplicity's sake, the text will identify Amadas as the author, with apologies to Barlowe.

Other writers outdid Amadas in their attempts to catch the attention of potential newcomers. Ralph Lane wrote enthusiastically to Hakluyt in an obvious advertisement, "[Virginia] is the goodliest and most pleasing Territorie of the world: for the continent is of an huge and unknowen greatnesse. . . . [I]f Virginia had but horses and kine in some reasonable proportion, I dare assure my selfe being inhabited with English, no realme in Christendome were comparable to it." In the rich piece of boosterism, Lane pointed out that the enjoyable, exotic products of other nations -- wines, oils, flax, rosins, pitch, frankincense, currants, and sugar -- could be cultivated in Virginia.[12]

Hakluyt was not the only author who peddled the romance of Virginia. Engraver Theodore de Bry joined forces with artist John White and writer Thomas Hariot to issue a sensationally beautiful, eye-catching tract promoting America. The heavily engraved cover featured the book's title, *A briefe and true report,* framed by a classical doorway and surrounded by beautifully drawn Indians and luscious-looking American produce. The engraving projected a decidedly inaccurate image of an America already smoothed by European civilization and high creature comforts. Inside, engravings which de Bry made from John White's expert paintings seemed more true-to-life. White depicted the natives of Virginia in stunning detail. Hariot, for his part, discussed the commodities of Virginia and the habits of her people.[13] As publisher of the work, de Bry made sure the book reached a huge European audience; he published it in English, French, German, and Latin.[14]

Despite the glowing nature of early reports from the New World, the first colonists were finding starvation, pain, and discouragement. Rumors were hatching about the viciousness of the natives so beautifully drawn by White. By 1608 it was well known that Indians had killed a colonist at the Virginia colony of Jamestown by shooting him with

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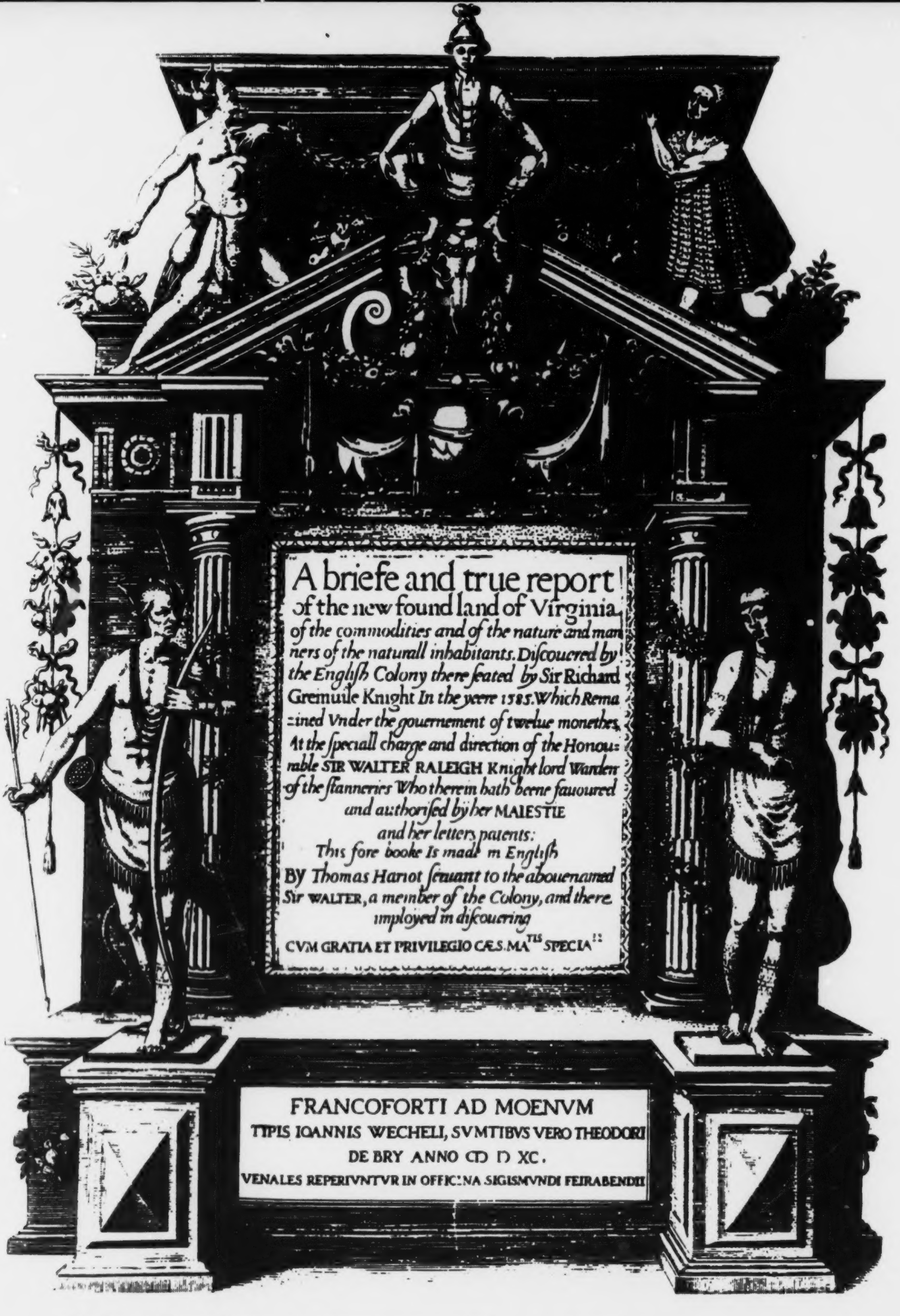
[12] Ralph Lane to Richard Hakluyt, 3 September 1585, in "An extract of Master Ralph Lanes letter," in Hakluyt, VI, p. 140.

[13] Theodore de Bry, *A briefe and true report of the newfound land of Virginia,* (Frankfurt, Germany: 1590); reprinted in facsimile as Theodore de Bry, *Thomas Hariot's Virginia* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms Inc., March of America Facsimile Series, Number 15).

[14] From a foreword to ibid. No author is listed for the foreword. The material appears on an unnumbered page before the facsimile starts.



A briefe and true report
of the new found land of Virginia:
of the commodities and of the nature and manners
of the naturall inhabitants. Diſcouered by
the Engliſh Colony there ſeated by Sir Richard
Greinuile Knight In the yeere 1585. Which Remained
Vnder the gouernement of twelue monethes,
At the ſpeciall charge and direction of the Honourable
SIR WALTER RALEIGH Knight lord Warden
of the ſtanneries Who therein hath beene ſauoured
and authoriſed by her MAIESTIE
and her letters patents:
This fore booke Is made in Engliſh
BY Thomas Hariot ſeruant to the abouenamed
Sir WALTER, a member of the Colony, and there
imployed in diſcouering

CVM GRATIA ET PRIVILEGIO CÆS. MA^{TIS} SPECIA

FRANCOFORTI AD MOENVM
TIPIS IOANNIS WECHELI, SVMTIBVS VERO THEODORI
DE BRY ANNO CIↃ IↃ XC.
VENALES REPERIVNTVR IN OFFICINA SIGISMVNDI FEIRABENDII

Title Page of Thomas Hariot's *A briefe and true report* (1590), engraved by Theodore de Bry. (Reproduced from the facsimile published as Theodore de Bry, *Thomas Hariot's Virginia* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms Inc., 1966).

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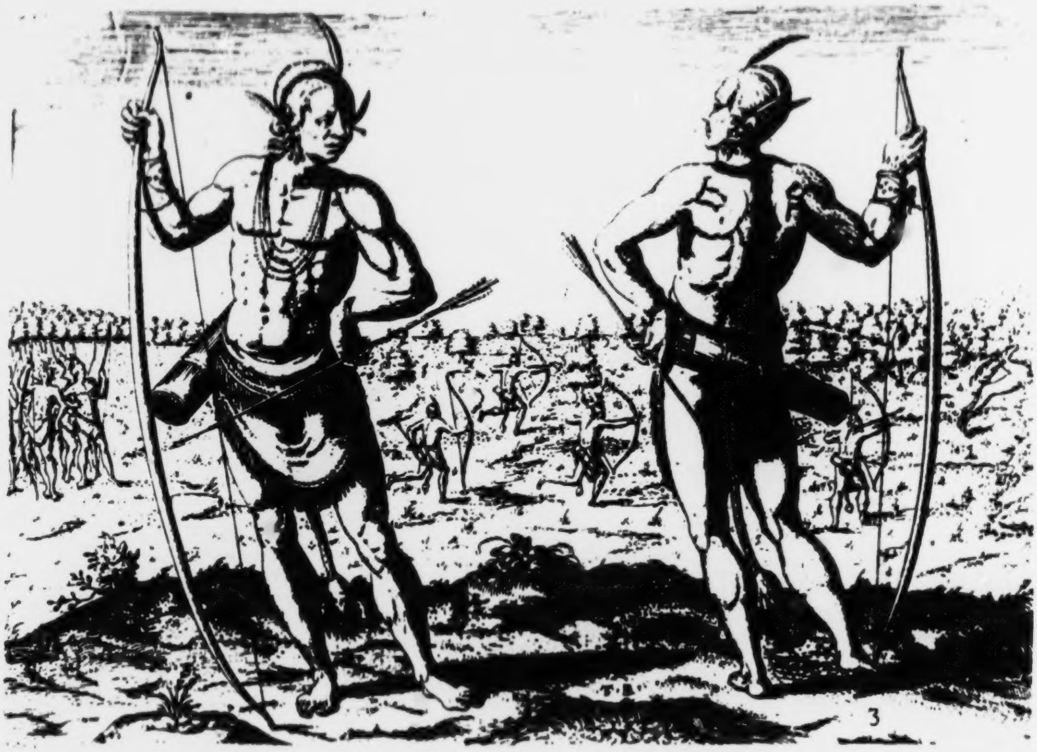
A weroan or great Lorde of Virginia. III.



THe Princes of Virginia are attyred in ſuche manner as is expreſſed in this figure. They weare the haire of their heades long and bynde opp the ende of theſame in a knot vnder thier eares. Yet they cutt the topp of their heades from the forehead to the nape of the necke in manner of a cokſcombe, ſtirkinge a faier lõge pecher of ſome berd att the Begininge of the creſte vppun their foreheads, and another ſhort one on bothe ſeides about their eares. They hange at their eares ether thicke pearles, or ſomwhat els, as the clawe of ſome great birde, as cometh in to their fanſye. Moreouer They ether pownes, or paynt their forehead, cheeks, chynne, bodye, armes, and leggs, yet in another ſorte then the inhabitantz of Florida. They weare a chaine about their necks of pearles or beades of copper, wich they muche eſteeme, and ther of wear they alſo braſelets ohn their armes. Vnder their breſts about their bellyes appeir certayne ſpotts, whear they vſe to lett them ſelues bloode, when they are ſicke. They hange before thẽ the ſkinne of ſome beaſte verye feinelye dreſſet in ſuche ſorte, that the tayle hangẽth downe behynde. They carye a quiuer made of ſmall ruſhes holding their bowe readie bent in on hand, and an arrowe in the other, radie to defend themſelues. In this manner they goe to warr, or tho their ſolemne feaſts and banquetts. They take muche pleaſure in huntinge of deer wher of theris great ſtore in the contrye, for yt is fruit full, pleaſant, and full of Goodly woods. Yt hathe alſo ſtore of riuers full of diuers ſorts of fiſhe. When they go to battel they paynt their bodyes in the moſt terible manner that thei can deuiſe.

Illustration from Thomas Hariot's *A briefe and true report* (1590), engraved by Theodore de Bry from a painting by John White.
(Reproduced from the facsimile published as Theodore de Bry, *Thomas Hariot's Virginia* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms Inc., 1966).

some thirty arrows. It was a horrible death.[15] Hastily, Virginia promoter John Smith issued a pamphlet to counteract negative rumors by discussing the positive uses of the native Americans in colony-building. Smith explained how he had hired Indians to take him deep into the interior. The Indians, he assured, were friendly, and they certainly knew the desolate country better than he did. They tried to help him find a lake that he hoped might encourage future English settlement.[16] Apparently Smith hoped the pamphlet would circumvent anti-Indian sentiments which were frightening to potential settlers. He did not want such antagonism to turn away future immigrants.

The governor of the fledgling Virginia plantation, the Right Honourable Lord De-La-Warre, was afraid of that kind of colony-killing antagonism, too. In fact, thanks to ugly rumors, backers who had bought stock in the colony were cancelling payments. In a scramble to save the essential subscription funds, De-La-Warre turned to the printing press. Although De-La-Warre's truthful description of sickness and dangerous seas might have made the average reader queasy, he went on to give a glowing report of Virginia's fertility and possibilities. The pamphlet was printed by the authority of the Council of Virginia.[17]

One of the colony's financial backers decided that the best way to protect his own investment in Virginia was to embarrass his lily-livered colleagues who wanted to pull out of the project. Virginia financier Thomas Abbay underwrote publication of a book which included a manuscript written by eight gentlemen in Virginia. Abbay himself wrote the introduction, claiming that if men were not persuaded by the book, he would recommend it to women. After all, he pointed out, it was Queen Isabella of Spain who had had the intelligence to finance Christopher Columbus's voyages when no one else would, and that act of female bravery had opened a New World to Europe. "Cannot this successful example move the incredulous of this time to consider, to conceave, and apprehend Virginia, which might be, or breed us a second India?" Abbay asked. "[H]ath not England an Izabell as well as Spain, nor yet a Columbus as well as Genua? yes surely it hath. . . ."[18]

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[15] John Smith, *A True Relation*, reprinted in Lyon Gardiner Tyler, ed., *Narratives of Early Virginia, 1606-1625* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1907), pp. 42-44.

[16] I.H., preface to Smith, in ibid., pp. 31-32.

[17] *The Relation of the Right Honourable the Lord De-La-Warre, Lord Governour and Captaine Generall of the Colonie, planted in Virginea* (London: printed by William Hall for William Welbie, 1611), reprinted in Tyler, pp. 200-214.

For their part, the eight gentlemen praised themselves and other colonists for amazing accomplishments. With tiny exploring parties of only seven to fifteen men, they had managed to discover many navigable rivers and to subdue several Indian nations with almost no bloodshed. Colonists Richard Wiffin, William Phettiplace, and Anas Todkill challenged their readers to do more reading: "peruse the Spanish *Decades* [and] the relations of M. Haklut." The writers dared readers to admit that the Jamestown colony was doing far more than had ever been done before, with very few resources.[19]

Adventurer John Smith remained a stalwart in the fight to win settlers and backing for new settlement in America. His 1616 book, *A Description of New England*, promised the reader "proofe of the present benefit this Countrey affoords: whither this present year, *eight voluntary Ships are gone to make further tryall.*" His intentions were clear. "[O]f all the foure parts of the world that I have yet seene not inhabited," Smith wrote, "could I but have means to transport a Colonie, I would rather live here than any where."[20]

Smith spoke directly to the average man who might make his living in New England. *A Description of New England* spared no effort in appealing to the common man, the very man who would have the most to gain by leaving England. Smith wrote:

> And here [in New England] are no hard Landlords to racke us with high rents, or extorted fines to consume us, no tedious pleas in law to consume us with their many years disputations for Iustice: no multitudes to occasion such impediments to good orders, as in popular States. . . . [H]ere every [man] may be master and

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[18] Thomas Abbay, introduction to John Smith, *A Map of Virginia* (Oxford, England: printed by Joseph Barnes, 1612), reprinted in ibid., pp. 77-78.

[19] Chapter by Richard Wiffin, William Phettiplace, and Anas Todkill in *Proceedings of the English Colony*, attached to John Smith, ibid., p. 179. "M. Haklut" is, of course, a reference to Richard Hakluyt's *Voyages*. Tyler added in a note on that page that "The Spanish *Decades*" referred either to Peter Martyr's *Decades* or to general histories by Oriedo and Herrera, which were grouped into decades of ten books each.

[20] John Smith, *A Description of New England* (1616), reprinted in Alan Smith, pp. 211, 223.

> owner of his own labour and land; or the greatest part in a small time. If hee have nothing but his hands, he may set up his trade: and by industrie quickly grow rich, spending but halfe that time wel, which in England we abuse in idlenes, or worse as ill."[21]

Being a shrewd businessman, however, Smith realized that the tender colonies of New England would not survive entirely on the disgruntled peoples of Europe. The colonies needed a monied merchant class as well, not just laborers. If merchants would voluntarily send out shipping, Smith promised, they would ultimately make a fortune when the colonies began to flourish. The investment would be repaid many times over. In fact, he said, men who used their own ships to break into the New England fishing business would succeed by supplying all of Europe more cheaply than could the men who fished out of Iceland, Holland, or Newfoundland. The fishing season in New England was simply longer.[22]

After attempting to persuade both the working man and the merchant, Smith turned his attention to the wealthy. New World colonies could not possibly survive without a continual financial flow from rich backers. Smith knew how to attract attention among the wealthy. High-brow Englishmen were worried about the alarming numbers of unemployed people shifting about England, begging, robbing, cheating, and stealing for a living. If the wealthy would agree to back New England financially, Smith argued, the curse of the idle poor could be turned into rich reward. The poor could find work in America, work that would reap great benefits for backers smart enough to develop American products. Smith confidently listed the New World products which could employ idle hands: wood, pitch, and tar; wines, fruits, and silk; fishing and, of course, the shipping industry, which would spring up to accommodate the export of all those wonderful goods. These industries, Smith reminded his readers, would "so employ and encourage a great part of our idlers. . . that could they but once taste the sweet fruits of their owne labours, doubtless many thousands would . . . take more pleasure in honest industries, then [*sic*] in their humours of dissolute idlenesse."[23]

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[21] Ibid., p. 226.
[22] Ibid., pp. 233, 236.

Smith couldn't resist a conclusion that cut across class lines: he turned the settlement of New England into a moral issue. In colonizing a new continent, he contended, men would purchase their property with the hazard of their own lives. They would build a foundation for prosperity, trusting in God's blessing and sealing that blessing with their own industry. They would convert the natives of the place to know both Christ and humanity. All of this, he said, would be done with honor and honesty.[24] The New World would almost magically bring out the best in all settlers by showing them their true moral might as people of God.

While the literature of persuasion passed from hand to hand across Europe, the character of America inevitably changed. Convinced by friends, relatives, speeches, word-of-mouth, and printed accounts, Europeans gambled their very lives on an ocean journey to a new land that had been billed as a paradise on Earth. As colonies drifted across the Atlantic -- and as they became less and less likely to drift back again in utter discouragement -- descriptions of America as a place for success grew even more appealing to people bent less on adventure and more on a committed move to a newly transplanted European civilization. The persuasive tracts mutated to reach that set of people.

Such pieces of persuasive writing reached a Londoner named John Winthrop, who eagerly snatched up a book containing the latest news from New England. Sending it to his son John in Suffolk, the elder Winthrop instructed young John to read it aloud to his mother and to let his brother Forth copy it to show around to people contemplating transplant to the New World.[25] The elder Winthrop hastily wrote another letter to his wife, Margaret, instructing her to listen to the book as it was read. Their friends and neighbors who "haue a mind to N:E: [New England]" would surely find it informative.[26] As Puritans, the Winthrops were trying to convince themselves that perhaps immigration to America would enable them to worship as they pleased. Whereas the Bible afforded them the religious guidance they needed, printed works of a more secular nature helped convince them of the practicalities of immigration.

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[23] Ibid., p. 237.

[24] Ibid., pp. 246-247.

[25] John Winthrop to John Winthrop, Jr., 9 October 1629, in Stewart Mitchell, ed., *Winthrop Papers* II, 1623-1630 (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1931), p. 156.

The Winthrops weren't the only religious people who were eyeing America. The Catholic Lord Baltimore was backing the settlement of Maryland. New England and Virginia had been successfully reported in the press, and the founders of Maryland did not intend to let similar opportunities for publicity slip by. After describing the founding of the colony, one writer marvelled:

> Thus within the space of sixe moneths, was laid the foundation of the Colonie in Maryland; and whosoever intends now to goe thither, shall finde the way so trodden, that hee may proceed with much more ease and confidence then [*sic*] these first adventurers could, who were ignorant both of Place, People, and all things else, and could expect to find nothing but what nature produced: besides, they could not in reason but think, the Natives would oppose them; whereas now the Countrey is discovered, and friendship with the natives is assured, houses built, and many other accomodations, as Cattell, Hogges, Poultry, Fruits and the like brought thither from England, Virginea, and other places, which are useful, both for profit and Pleasure: and without boasting it may be said, that this Colony hath arived to more in sixe moneths, then [*sic*] Virginia did in as many yeeres.[27]

The writer's logic was perhaps intoxicatingly persuasive to people who had been hesitant to carve a new civilization out of the forests of Virginia: Virginia was now settled and productive and, more importantly, nearby. The builders of Maryland need not suffer what Virginians had suffered in opening a new colony to settlement.

Besides offering the comforting news of Virginia's nearby location, the Maryland promotion offered a starter's kit for settlement. If a Maryland immigrant were wealthy enough to support an indentured servant, he need only clip a pre-printed blank indenture contract bound into the book. Likewise, the book included a clip-and-use bill of lading form -- and it suggested exactly what a settler needed to include on that bill in the way of food, clothes, bedding, arms, tools, and household goods. The book included other useful settlement information throughout, such as Lord Baltimore's conditions for settlement; the amounts of land various settlers were entitled to receive; the charter of the colony; and a map of the area.[28]

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[26] John Winthrop to Margaret Winthrop, 9 October 1629, in ibid., p. 157. In a note on that page, editor Mitchell speculates that the book mentioned was Francis Higginson, *True Relacion of the last Voyage to New England. . . 1629.*

[27] *A Relation of Maryland; together with a Map of the Countrey* (London: 1635), reprinted in Clayton Colman Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), pp. 76-77.

Writers of such persuasive literature on the New World were confident that people of all classes were reachable by persuasive literature. John Hammond, in a 1656 work entitled *Leah and Rachel*, spoke to people who might go to the Maryland or Virginia area as servants. Hammond offered tips, ideas, and assurances. To drive home his point, Hammond compared life in Virginia to life in the poor homes of England. He interviewed a destitute and pathetic English fagot seller, whose horrible existence made the hardships of America seem absolutely rosy. Hammond's persuasive intent was obvious: the poor of England were foolish if they didn't opt for work in America.[29]

The pro-settlement prints emphasized more and more the element of established civilization, and less and less the wide-eyed description of the natural goodness of the land. Articles such as one in London's *Moderate Intelligencer* newspaper emphasized the fact that a gentleman was headed to the Carolina province as governor, bringing "many Gentlemen of quality and their families with him." Although the article did describe the lush qualities of Carolina, it emphasized how close it was, via river, to well-established Virginia. The colonists of Virginia, the article assured, could provide "English Provisions, Cowes, and Oxen, Horse, and Mares, sheepe and Hogs. . . . all readily available."[30] Still another Carolina promotional tract insisted that haberdashers, ironmongers, drapers, and stationers were direly needed in America, as "sterill witted Americans" admired such fine products of a civilized people. The tract promised that merchants would find "prosperous happiness and happy prosperity." The author of the tract, a London gentleman named Edward Williams, listed clothing, arms, and household items that a Carolina settler needed, and he estimated that it would cost about £40 per person, on average, to ship those goods across the Atlantic. A settler himself could count on paying a crossing fare of £6.[31]

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[28] Ibid., pp. 70-112, especially pp. 99-100.

[29] John Hammond, *Leah and Rachel, or the Two Fruitfull Sisters Virginia and Mary-land* (London: Printed by T. Mabb, 1656), reprinted in ibid., pp. 285-300.

[30] *The Moderate Intelligencer* (London), 2 May 1649, quoted in William S. Powell, ed., *Ye Countie of Albemarle in Carolina: A Collection of Documents, 1664-1675* (Raleigh, N.C.: State Department of Archives and History, 1958), p. xix. Powell noted that this announced settlement has been lost to history and may never have taken place.

The rapidly developing civilization of America unleashed a flurry of new persuasive tracts in Europe. No longer comparing new American colonies with their American neighbors, pamphlets and books began touting the advantages of America over Europe. Robert Horne, for example, pressed his case for more settlers in a better-than-England Carolina. Writing for the Lords Proprietors of the colony, he advertised Carolina as the common man's governmental paradise. He assured readers that the governor of the place had no power to levy a tax or pass a law without the consent of the people's assembly. "The Governour is to rule but 3 years, and then learn to obey, . . ." Horne wrote. Horne made a big appeal to any younger gentlemen sons of wealthy English families who deserved an inheritance but who weren't going to get one under "the hard useage of our Country." They, Horne assured, would find their fortune in Carolina. "[H]ere, with a few Servants and a small Stock a great Estate may be raised,. . . ." Horne said, assuring those anxious younger sons that they soon would become the heads of the most famous families in America.[32]

Horne also sought servants, assuring each servant a comfortable subsistence and "a way to raise his fortunes far beyond what he could ever hope for in England." He made a special sales pitch to single women, too, for American servant-women "think themselves in the Golden Age, when Men paid a Dowry for their Wives; for if they be but Civil, and under 50 years of Age, some honest Man or other, will purchase them for their Wives." Horne concluded with the name of the man to contact for sailing dates.[33]

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[31] Edward Williams, *Virginia, More Especially the South Part thereof, Richly and Truly Valued* (London, 1650), quoted in ibid., pp. xix-xx.

[32] [Horne?], in Salley, p. 65, 71-72. Salley indicated that the author was writing for the Proprietors.

A number of tracts persuaded members of oppressed religious sects to think of America. Horne emphasized that the Lords Proprietors of Carolina allowed freedom of conscience in religion.[34] Similarly, a 1683 booklet promoting East New Jersey promised settlers "Libertie in matters of Religion. . . . To be a Planter or Inhabitant, nothing is more required but the acknowledging of one *Almighty*GOD, and to have a Share in the Government, a simple profession of faith of Jesus Christ. . . ." Furthermore, East New Jersey specifically sought to avoid squabbles among religious sects by suggesting that anyone who wished to turn out a governmental official merely for religion's sake would be reminded to live by the Golden Rule -- as the booklet put it, "To do as they would be done by."[35]

As the seventeenth century gave way to the eighteenth, promotional literature continued as a popular way to induce settlement as ever larger areas of the continent opened to newcomers. William Byrd II, a wealthy Virginia landholder, used the press to seek Swiss settlement on part of his vast holdings in 1737.[36] With such a long tradition of settlement-inducing literature to draw on, Byrd had a readily useable formula to follow in his persuasion. Describing the settlement tract as the "Land of Eden," he first touted the agricultural possibilities of his land, and he then cited Virginia's natural abundance in trees, flowers, fruits, wild and domestic birds, fish, and shellfish.[37]

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[33] Ibid., pp. 65, 72-73

[34] Ibid., pp. 65 and 71.

[35] *A Brief Account of the Province of East-New-Jersey in America, 1683,* reprinted in Edward Legare Pennington, ed., *Apostle of New Jersey: John Talbot, 1645-1727*(Philadelphia: Church Historical Society, 1938), p. 5.

[36] There is much scholarly doubt as to whether William Byrd II actually wrote or merely supplied information for the book in question, entitled *Newly Found Eden* (Bern, Switzerland: printed for the Helvetian Society, 1737. The title is translated from the original German in which the book was published.). The book has been translated into English in modern times by Richard Croom Beatty and William J. Mulloy, eds. and trans., as *William Byrd's Natural History of Virginia, or The Newly Discovered Eden* (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1940). See p. xxiv. In spite of scholarly argument over the origin of *Newly Found Eden,* it is obvious that Byrd truly was soliciting Swiss settlers. He wrote to a friend in Pennsylvania that he was expecting Germans and Swiss from abroad to settle at his "Eden" lands, and he asked the friend to try to convince Germans in Pennsylvania to move to the "Eden" territory. A Swiss gentleman, he said, would soon arrive in Philadelphia to solicit Swiss settlers to move to "Eden." William Byrd II to John Bartram, 30 November 1738, in Marion Tinling, ed. *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776* II (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1977), pp. 530-531. Byrd will be called the author of the 1737 work for the purposes of this study. Its content, not its author, is the most important factor in the discussion. It is important to note that there were three well-known William Byrds in colonial Virginia -- a father, son, and grandson. Although none of the three labelled themselves by number, scholars commonly call them William Byrd I, William Byrd II, and William Byrd III for clarity's sake. This study will follow that tradition.

Byrd did not stop there. He capitalized on the accumulated wisdom of persuasive pamphlet-writers who seemed to feel that potential American settlers responded the most easily to promises of civilization and ease. Consequently, he included sections on the food and drink of Virginia, as well as some paragraphs on "How One May Clean and Clear the Land Very Easily and Conveniently." He also spent a great deal of detail touting the monetary system of Virginia, which he hailed as far superior to that of the two Carolinas. There was no paper money made in Virginia, Byrd assured his readers. Carolinians suffered from the use of paper money, losing ten to twelve percent "from their miserable paper money, if they want to exchange it for gold or silver." Europeans who settled in the "Land of Eden," Byrd pointed out, could conveniently expect to trade in various cosmopolitan currencies that they might use in the old country -- currencies of England, Spain, France, Portugal, Holland, and even Arabia. Also, he said, Indian wampum was valid money in Virginia.[38]

The Persuasive Effect

For well over a century, printed materials such as Byrd's had been sent out across Europe with authors' unwavering faith that they would reach an audience. The writers clearly expected that people at all levels of society, from servants to middle-class merchants to the vastly wealthy, would read and respond to the printed word on America. Authors designed their writings to appeal to a wide array of Europeans, from those who had deep religious convictions to those who wanted to escape harsh inheritance laws.

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[37] Beatty and Mulloy, pp. 16-23.
[38] Ibid., pp. 86-93.

It seems obvious, from the decades-long outpouring of pro-settlement prints, that the promotional books and pamphlets were having the desired effect. Over more than a century's time, writers would have given up had not the mass media produced the results they desired. Beyond that bit of logic, however, Europeans of the day frequently reported that they were persuaded by American promotional writings.

For example, the English editor of one pro-Virginia work grew so excited by reading the manuscript that he appended his own pro-settlement ideas to the book. As he put it, the book showed that Virginia appeared to be worthy of high hopes. "[M]y prayer shall ever be," he wrote enthusiastically, "that so faire a land, may bee inhabited by those that professe and love the Gospel."[39]

Other editors noted in print that promotional tracts were widely read. John Smith collected a variety of works into his *Generall Historie of Virginia, [and] New England*. In the middle of a luscious relation by sailor John Brierton describing the abundance of food on one particular island, Smith cut the description short and announced he would not "cloy you with particulars," as those were widely available in other writings. He expected people to be reading such details elsewhere.[40] As a committed promoter of Virginia, Smith likely would not have abbreviated so delicious a description had he not been absolutely sure the public was devouring the information in other tracts.

In a similar instance, the anonymous writer of *A Relation of Maryland* expected that readers routinely would find other promotional literature available, and he had confidence they would read it. Noting that America was geographically between Virginia and New England, the Maryland writer suggested that readers take note of John Smith's printed works on Virginia and William Wood's newly published treatise on New England. The Maryland promoter assured readers that the colony bore agricultural and natural similarities to southern New England and to northern Virginia. He added that Smith spoke of warlike Indians, whereas it appeared that the native Americans were actually peaceful and friendly when treated kindly, as they were in Maryland.[41]

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[39] W.S., concluding note to "Proceedings of the English colony," in John Smith, *A Map of Virginia*, reprinted in Tyler, p. 204. Tyler identified "W.S." as Dr. William Simmonds on p. 76 note.

[40] John Brierton, "A brief Relation of the Description of Elizabeths Ile, 1602", in Capt. John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England & The Summer Isles* (1624), reprinted in Alan Smith, p. 73.

Men who footed the bills for promotional literature had no doubt that it worked; in fact, they realized that underpromoted colonies suffered by comparison to those which were heavily touted in the press. The Lords Proprietors of Carolina hired Secretary of Carolina Affairs Samuel Wilson to write *An Account of the Province of Carolina, in America*, which was addressed "to such as have thought of transporting themselves thither." In the tract, Wilson mourned that Carolina had not gotten her fair share of settlers, due entirely to poor publicity in the past. He felt it was his duty to tout his province. He did so with a geographic flair, faulting Canada for its harsh winters and comparing the Carolina climate with such pleasant places as Aleppo, Smyrna, Antioch, Judea, and Nanking.[42]

A number of travellers and settlers acknowledged reading promotional prints. Most of those mentioned the fact in order to correct mistakes in printed accounts. For example, the fastidious Jasper Danckaerts, travelling under an assumed name in order to find a location for a religious colony, found several errors in the printed map of Maryland that he had consulted. Peeved, he noted the necessary corrections and showed them to the actual publisher of the map when he got back to Europe. Danckaerts knew that the atlas containing the offending maps had been sent to the kings of both England and France by its maker, the Dutch mathematician Johannes van Keulen. "It is a beautiful work," Danckaerts commented, "but [van Keulen] was surprised, after having corrected it so much as he had, that I should point out to him several errors."[43]

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[41] *A Relation of Maryland*, reprinted in Hall, pp. 81, 83-84. Hall identifies Wood's treatise as *New England's Prospect* (London, 1634).

[42] Samuel Wilson, *An Account of the Province of Carolina in America* (London: printed by G. Larkin for Francis Smith, 1682), reprinted in Salley, pp. 164, 168, and 175.

[43] Journal entry of 10 October 1680 by Jasper Danckaerts, in Bartlett Burleigh James and J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons;

Another error-corrector was himself a writer of promotional literature. A Huguenot traveller from Dauphiné in France, Monsieur Durand, was incensed at the false information given in many promotional pamphlets. In publishing memoirs of his travels through America in 1686, Durand revealed that a wide circle of his friends and acquaintances, including himself, had been persuaded to travel to the New World by reading promotional literature. Such literature was simply the talk of Europe. Durand wrote:

> I thought at one time of publishing just a description of [Virginia], similar to the pamphlets seen in France regarding Carolina and Pennsylvania; but later I realized that appearing unsupported, paper being made to say anything, it might with reason be suspected of untruth, for I am obliged in fairness to declare that these same pamphlets wander from the truth in many respects, as I will show in due course.

Therefore, Durand decided to publish his adventures as a traveller, rather than a pure promotional pamphlet.[44]

Clearly Durand had read such promotional literature, and clearly he made comparisons as he wandered in religious exile across the Virginia countryside. Before leaving France, Durand had obtained and read pamphlets about Carolina, hoping to flee there to practice his Huguenot religion in peace. He made "careful inquiry" among people who he thought could confirm the truthfulness of pamphlets on Carolina, and they must have confirmed the pamphlets, for he decided to move overseas to the colony. Sailing to England as the first leg of his trip to America, he and a widow aboard the same ship frequently discussed the promotional literature they had read, evidently with much relish and excitement. The lady was a silkmaker, and she had been convinced to move by pamphlets touting Carolina as the home of abundant mulberry trees, the favorite of silkworms.[45]

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translated from the Dutch by Henry C. Murphy in 1867), p. 297. The editors identified the atlas in question as *Grand Nouvel Atlas de la Mer.*

[44] Durand of Dauphiné, *A Huguenot Exile in Virginia* (The Hague: 1687; translated from the French and reprinted, New York: The Press of the Pioneers, 1934), p. 56. Durand, whose first name is unknown, seems to have been from a place called Dauphiné; hence, his name is listed as Durand of Dauphiné.

[45] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

When they got to England, Durand again tried to confirm the promotional literature he had read. A Huguenot pastor in England told him he had had good reports about Carolina from a hometown merchant-friend who had immigrated there. The pastor's friend did warn all who asked that they needed to secure passage under a good shipmaster -- a suggestion which Durand failed to heed. Durand found that the passage cost twenty écus, and even at that steep price the passenger had to sleep three to a bed between decks and was forced to eat disgusting pea soup and "the most unsavoury codfish that can be found." Durand paid thirty shillings extra for a "large" room, which featured an uncomfortable bed for himself and another for the silkmaking lady and a lad travelling with her.[46]

To make matters worse, the "numskull of a captain," as Durand described him, managed to get lost somewhere in mid-ocean. Fortunately the voyagers came upon another ship which had just come from Barbados. The master of the other ship, a chatty fellow, boarded Durand's ship and talked with immigrants about their plans for settlement in the New World. The other passengers had also been persuaded by promotional pamphlets. They all, Durand recorded, "told [the captain] they were going to settle in [Carolina], described in some pamphlets they had with them as the most beautiful & the most fertile of all America, & many persons in London had assured them that this was true." The captain flatly disagreed. He had been to Carolina, and he spoke from his own experience when he told the travellers that they had been sadly misinformed by the persuasive advertisements about Carolina. He assured them that Carolina not only had terrible soil, but that it was also a terribly unhealthy place. The immigrants were so shocked that many of them transferred to the other captain's ship, heading to Virginia. Durand did not join them, as he had not ever read of any Frenchmen in Virginia.[47]

It so happened that the "numskull" captaining Durand's ship managed to lose his way again, so that Durand ultimately wound up in Virginia anyway. In spite of the fact that

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[46] Ibid., p. 89.
[47] Ibid., pp. 97-98.

Durand had mentioned devouring pamphlets about Carolina and Pennsylvania, he clearly had read enough pamphlets about Virginia to be somewhat amazed at the inaccuracies in them. Although there *were* abundant trees, there were absolutely *no* exotic trees, such as olive, orange, and lemon trees, as pamphlets had claimed. Nor were there any of the highly touted wild grapevines and cotton. "I have seen pamphlets in which it was also said that in these countries winter began when it was spring in Europe," Durand scoffed, "but this is not true either; December, January & February are their winter months." After wandering around Virginia for some time, Durand decided to return home and publish a true account of the place. "I realized that this country was unknown & as it had no proprietors, no one had taken the trouble to print accounts of it, such as those of Carolina & Pennsylvania," he wrote. He felt it was God's will that he "inform the many poor [French] refugees of this pleasant & healthful retreat."[48]

Durand of Dauphiné and his acquaintances were not the only new arrivals in America who had read promotional literature closely enough to make them want to immigrate. Anglican church official Gideon Johnston complained to the Society for Propagating the Gospel that the society's missionaries were being falsely persuaded by American promotional literature circulating in England. Missionaries' heads were turned, he said, by all the fabulous claims in "those Books which give an Account of this province." Johnston particularly scoffed at one tract's claim that nectarines grew so abundantly in South Carolina that people fed them to their pigs. Other exaggerated printed claims touched on climate, fertility of the soil, abundance of different fruits, and varieties of wild animals available for the hunting. The missionaries, he complained bitterly, were disappointed at the realities they found.[49]

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[48] Ibid., pp. 103-104, 155.

[49] Gideon Johnston to the Secretary to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 5 July 1710, in Frank J. Klingberg, ed., *Carolina Chronicle: The Papers of Commissary Gideon Johnston, 1707-1716* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), pp. 60-61.

Furthermore, Johnston said, the printed maps of the place were not accurate. He criticized:

> The same fine appearance does Charles Town make in the Maps. . . yet many of those fine and regular Buildings which are represented in it, are not to be met with when we come upon the Spot to look for them; and we find our Selves more deceived & disappointed in other particulars, than we do in this.[50]

Likewise, the trustees of Georgia sought to undo falsely hopeful tracts that were having disastrous results by attracting lazy settlers who were only interested in an easy life. One particularly offensive tract had been put out by Colonel Jean Pierre Purry, a Swiss settlement entrepreneur who represented Georgia as nothing less than the Promised Land, overflowing with all good things for even the slothful settler. "Many were led into errors by this falacious account which has been found by experience to have very little truth," commented Peter Gordon, a founding father of Savannah. "[H]owever, those accounts excited the curiosity and desire of great numbers of unfortunate people, to apply to the Trustees" to immigrate. In fact, Gordon found himself distressed with the quality of settlers in Georgia, so many of whom had been drawn over by promotional literature with its false promises of easy riches and luxurious leisure. "[E]ver strangers to labour and industry. . . .," he complained, these settlers had had their "minds puffed up with mighty hopes and expectations of success."[51]

Banking on the fact that persuasive literature had done much to persuade people wrongly, the Georgia trustees themselves turned to the press to undo the damage done and to "prepare the minds of the people" for reality. Gordon noted:

> [They published] some account of their designs, and sometime after, reasons for establishing said Colony. Wherein it was represented the excelence of the climate, the fruitfulness of the land, and the great plenty of good things with which the country abounded, and likewise the great advantage the nation in generall would reap from such a setlement. [*sic*] which was capable by that amount of producing silk and wine in such quantities [to satisfy all of England].[52]

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[50] Ibid, p. 61.

[51] Undated journal entry by Peter Gordon in E. Merton Coulter, ed., *The Journal of Peter Gordon, 1732-1735* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1963), pp. 24-26.

[52] Ibid., p. 25

The promotional material appealing for settlers to America was read outside of Europe as well. Virginian William Byrd II, for instance, had read many English newspaper advertisements soliciting settlers for America. Since he was trying to convince immigrants to choose his "Land of Eden" as a homeplace, he tried to counteract the effect of various and pervasive print campaigns to lure settlers to various parts of America. Writing in his own promotional tract, he scoffed at a company that had gotten together a South Carolina settlement by using the printed word to dupe the unsuspecting. In so doing he revealed the overwhelming response to such rosy promotional tracts. He wrote:

> [This plan] they therefore soon put into execution, and had printed placards sent out, as well as reports in the newspapers through all England, to wit -- that those who go to South Carolina, and desire to settle there, might expect free food and passage in the ships, money in their hands, provisions for a year after they arrive, also fifty acres of land, tools for cultivating and every assistance from the Company. These great promises moved many people, to whom South Carolina was not known, to go there, and they came therefore in great crowds to London, where the said Company or society had everything ready to receive them, and to send them to said Carolina, whence they had dispatched many hundred households, not worrying whether the land was good or bad, healthful or unhealthful. This great rush lasted, however, only for a short time, and only long enough for those first sent to arrive there and see that they had been deceived.[53]

The deceptive South Carolina venture was not the only one conceived in print, according to Byrd. He went on to criticize a Georgia settlement society's tactics. ". . . [T]hey have had their emmissaries or commissioned people write to Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and other countries," he said, "and [have] made known by printing and writings that all those who wished to go to Georgia or South Carolina will be shown all conceivable support and help." The response was staggering. Byrd reported that many groups of people from Germany and Switzerland came with leaders to London and were transported to their hellish destination. Byrd charged that they had been paid to keep quiet about actual conditions in "such a miserable and unhealthful land." It was, in Byrd's estimation, a "godless transaction."[54]

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[53] Beatty and Mulloy, pp. 13-14.
[54] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

Conclusion

Byrd and Durand and the Georgia trustees were themselves settlement brokers in their own ways. They were doing just what everyone else was doing -- building up their own particular colonial areas as the greatest gift of Providence. Undoubtedly they were somewhat guilty in decrying rival promotional literature as pure lies, for probably their own prints contained hyperbole. It is significant, however, that each of them saw an overwhelming response among readers of promotional literature.

Europeans did, indeed, read and depend on promotional literature, or it would not have been so pervasive throughout some 200 years of colonial settlement. Writers such as Danckaerts and Johnston admitted use of the literature and realized that the printed word and printed maps of America fell into many hands. Writers such as Gordon and Durand and Byrd reported widespread use of promotional tracts by others.

Truly, there were other things which sparked people to immigrate -- perhaps a persuasive sermon or a letter from a colonist already in America, and also the word-of-mouth reports from sailors, merchants, and people who returned from America for various reasons. But it is apparent that many, many people gained either exposure to the idea of settlement or confirmation that settlement was desirable by reading promotional literature about the New World. Those persuasive accounts of America, carried across Europe on the printed page, worked their magic to induce settlement by people of all classes, including the oppressed, the well-off, people of many ethnic backgrounds, the lazy, the industrious, those of a variety of religious backgrounds, people of various occupations. Attracting a wide variety of people from a wide variety of backgrounds, these printed materials left a deep and everlasting effect on the nature of the American populace. Were it not for the vast American promotional literature of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, colonial America would no doubt have been settled far more slowly than it was, and probably by a less diverse body of settlers than it was.

Were it not for the printed word, Europeans might have been far more hesitant than they were to find America as a viable alternative to life at home. It is impossible to guess *exactly* what might have happened without the printed word promoting colonial America, but it is safe to say that without it, a large and diverse number of American settlers would have remained in Europe.

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THE IMPACT OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ON THE OCCUPATIONAL IDEOLOGY OF JOURNALISTS: A COMPARISON OF PRE- AND POST-REVOLUTION PROSPECTUSES

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In his 1803 Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century, Reverend Dr. Samuel Miller discussed how the American Revolution affected the country's newspapers. According to Miller, newspapers were fundamentally altered:

> It is worthy of remark that newspapers have almost entirely changed their form and character within the period under review. For a long time after they were first adopted as a medium of communication to the public, they were confined, in general, to the mere statement of facts. But they have gradually assumed an office more extensive, and risen to a more important station in society. They have become the vehicles of discussion, in which the principles of government, the interests of nations, the spirit and tendency of public measures, and the public and private characters of individuals, are all arraigned, tried, and decided. Instead, therefore, of being considered now, as they once were, of small moment in society, they have become immense moral and political engines, closely connected with the welfare of the state, and deeply involving both its peace and prosperity.[1]

While Miller's interest in the revolution and the press has been widespread among scholars, few have explored the era beyond a few central questions. Among the topics studied most often have been how newspaper publishers and editors became increasingly enmeshed within the political environment during the revolution and the period following it, and questions about when printers began to possess a clearly developed theory of freedom of press.[2] Of lesser interest to historians have been questions about how the revolution may have affected the development of the burgeoning journalistic occupational group and its members. While some scholars have examined certain prominent members' careers and enterprises, fewer have gone beyond individual biography to studied the characteristics of the burgeoning eighteenth-century occupational group as a whole.[3]

The idea that the American Revolution's transformation of the country's broader political structures would cultivate change within the occupational development of the journalistic occupational group comes out of the work of sociologist Andrew Abbott, who studies occupational and professional group development. According to Abbott, the emergence of new technologies, major events, and changes in broader political, economic, and social structures often precipitates development in the occupational work structures and ideologies of occupations and professions.[4] Likewise, mass communication scholars have examined how changes in politics, economics, and social structures affect media institutions. Donohue, Tichenor, and Olien, for example, have studied the impact of such on the press, and Dicken-Garcia likewise provides a model that predicts that the press will change in relation to shifts in its broader cultural and social organizational structures.[5]

Within the broad question of how the revolution may have affected the overall occupational development of journalists lies a number of avenues for research. Studies of the occupation, for example, might examine how journalistic work tasks changed, or how the demands of an environment demanding more political content may have taxed the knowledge resources of some newspaper editors. But this paper takes up another question, one about the occupational ideology of the journalistic occupational group. Its broad purpose is to learn whether the revolution, which ushered in an era of a more politicized newspaper, also may have led to changes in the occupational ideology of the burgeoning journalistic group.

Historians have few sources that can help them delve into the minds of eighteenth-century newspaper journalists. Unpublished diaries and letters, for example, might shed light on how journalists' thinking about their work might have changed during this period. But too few of these remain for studies of the overall group, and so historians must look to other sources. One document that compared to diaries and letters is more available, and that lends itself well to studies of the ideological threads of journalism, is the newspaper prospectus. Published statements of printers and publishers designed to explain to potential subscribers their publishing plans and approaches in their work, research for the paper examines and compares pre- and post-Revolutionary War prospectus statements of newspaper publishers and editors.

The methodology used here is primarily qualitative and strongly influenced by the cultural studies approach. While the theoretical framework comes from sociology, the methodology rests on the cultural studies theory that meaning (or reality) is socially constructed through cultural experiences, primarily language and other communication forms.[6] Hence, the underlying argument here is that journalists, through such statements as newspaper prospectuses and others, socially constructed definitions of their occupation and of the journalistic occupational group.[7] Such messages repeated, or linked into patterns of meaning, over time created a public perception (or construction) of journalistic work, what journalists should do and how, and what the public should depend on journalists for.

Before reporting on what was found in the research, the following two sections provide background information that will help place the study in a broader context. First, using criteria identified by occupational sociologists for detecting the emergence of occupational groups, the paper studies colonial America's journalistic occupational group before the American Revolution. Following this, the paper discusses in greater detail the newspaper prospectus and its usefulness as a source for historians interested in studying various aspects of the journalistic group's history.

Emergence of a Nascent Journalistic Occupational Group in Colonial America

When Boston printer and postmaster John Campbell in 1704 issued the Boston News-Letter, colonial America's first regularly-published newspaper, he became one of the first members of a nascent American occupational group.[8] Although there were earlier providers of journalistic communication in British America, a distinguishable journalistic group did not begin to form until Campbell and others began to issue newspapers during the first half of the eighteenth century.[9]

The emergence of America's earliest journalistic occupational group can be studied by applying various indicators of group emergence suggested by occupational sociologists. One such indicator is regular payment to workers for particular common work tasks.[10] The work of the early group, which included both abstract tasks, such as writing and editing, as well as the technical work involved in such early journalistic work, was closely tied to the development of the newspaper medium, which, in its earliest form, disseminated largely non-controversial foreign communication and some local commercial and general information.[11] Evidence of eighteenth-century newspaper business enterprises suggests that, by the American Revolution, all who published sucessful newspapers earned at least a portion of their livings doing journalistic work. Printer partners Benjamin Franklin and David Hall, for example, earned almost 60 percent of their cash receipts from the publication of the Pennsylvania Gazette, while at Williamsburg, Virginia, the Hunter printing firm in 1764 earned over half of its gross printing revenue from the issuance of the Virginia Gazette.[12]

Sociologists suggest the establishment of a regularly-used method for training newcomers is another indicator of the emergence of occupational groups.[13] Since early issuers of newspapers left few records detailing their occupational practices, one cannot ascertain just when the training of new journalists began to take on the characteristics of a routine. Most issuers of newspapers by the War for Independence were printers, so it can be assumed that most newcomers by then learned journalistic work through apprenticeships.[14] Clearly, the work routines apprentices were expected to learn would have varied according to the master printers' printing specialties. For example, those who specialized in printing religious materials and did not issue newspapers would not have incorporated journalistic training into their apprentices' duties.

A third indicator of occupational group emergence is the assignment of a particular social status to individuals who regularly perform certain categories of work.[15] While some issuers of colonial newspaper would have had the social status commonly assigned society's artisan classes, others more likely were highly regarded due to their social, education or literary backgrounds.[16] For example, according to Botein, who has studied the trade habits and occupational ideologies of eighteenth-century printers, the diversity of their pursuits meant newspaper publishers ranked neither as lowly as "meer mechanics" nor as highly as society "principal[s]";[17] and, he continued, the multiplicity of their endeavors meant a printer could become "much more than a printer," adding that "by the sum of his activities, he might well become a prominent man--unavoidably involved in a wide range of local affairs, though not necessarily with effective influence."[18]

Finally, sociologists suggest that the coalescence of an occupational group is indicated when those who regularly do a particular type of work, despite disparate backgrounds, adopt similar occupational practices, rhetoric, standards and values.[19] And sociologists also claim that the adoption of occupational structures and dissemination of occupational rhetoric can facilitate group coalescence and legitimization.[20] In consideration of such ideas, it was thought that eighteenth-century newspaper prospectuses might contain messages about the occupational group's work, standards and societal roles, and that such messages might be studied as possible indicators of possible impact of the American Revolution on the group's sense of its occupational roles. Before reporting on research that examined several groups of journalistic prospectuses, the following section provides further information about journalistic prospectus writing.

Prospectus Writing

Prospectus writing was one of the earliest occupational routines established by the members of the burgeoning American journalistic group, since from the start of newspaper publishing in the colonies, few failed to issue them.[21] While it is impossible to discern specifically why America's journalistic group adopted the practice of issuing newspaper prospectuses, there are a number of plausible explanations. Since newspapers have always been identified with literary undertakings, journalists may have adopted already-established routines of book authors and publishers, who often introduced themselves and their book plans in introductory statements. In fact, early newspaper prospectus writers at times mentioned that this custom in more general publishing meant they, too, as authors, were expected to introduce themselves and their literary enterprises.[22]

Additionally, some printers may have believed prospectuses would help them reach those who had not heard of their newspapers via other channels of communication. Or, perhaps some hoped such a published statement would lend their new enterprises a degree of formality that would communicate a sense of purpose, stability and legitimacy. And since censorship was a concern early in the the eighteenth century, anyone starting a newspaper must have believed it essential to provide some explanation of the undertaking to those who wielded authority.[23]

Although prospectus writing was common, prospectuses differed in length, style, tone and prominence of display in the newspaper. Campbell's 1704 prospectus, for example, was only a few sentences on the bottom of the back of the one-double-sided page. In contrast, James Franklin's prospectus was displayed prominently on the front page of the New England Courant in 1721. Additionally, some authors' rhetoric was direct, simple, and unaffected, while others' statements were more complex, and contained more florid language or tones ranging from obsequious to sarcastic.

The authors had various methods of circulating prospectuses to potential patrons. Journalists sometimes, for example, issued prospectuses in the first number of their newspapers. But others were more cautious and circulated a prospectus in handbill form to test the waters before issuing the first issues of their proposed newspapers. In 1728, for example, Samuel Keimer published a two-page handbill titled "Advertisement," before he began publishing the Pennsylvania Gazette, or the Universal Instructor.[24] Later, having garnered enough support to begin publication, he reprinted the prospectus in the newly-established newspaper.

Earlier research reporting on a textual analysis of prospectuses issued by the providers of newspapers during the 1704-1770 period, showed that pre-Revolutionary War newspaper prospectuses included both exlicitly-stated denotative and connotative occupational messages about the group and its work. In the former category was information on both mundane and important matters, such as the kinds of content journalists would provide the public and messages of a more commercial nature on frequency of publication, subscription cost, delivery procedures, and advertising rates. In addition, the authors of early newspaper prospectuses also dwelt on more sensitive occupational matters, such as their societal roles, credentials, and affiliations with others in the community. Finally, this group of pre-Revolutionary War prospectuses suggests that only a few newspaper journalists of the period sought to convey the idea that they would serve their communities as regular providers of political communication.[25]

A study of prospectuses issued both before and after the Revolution was undertaken to answer the following more specific questions:

1) What messages in prospectuses reveal that members of the period's journalistic group may have considered their roles as political communicators, their relationships to politicians, politics and other political matters altered after the American Revolution?

2) Did prospectuses mention the impact of the American Revolution on the newspaper press?

3) Did they contain statements about the power, usefulness, or benefits, of the newspaper in providing political information?

As mentioned above, two groups of prospectuses were examined and compared. The first group consisted of those issued between 1704 and 1778, and the second appeared after the Revolution, from 1783 to 1800.[26]

Findings in a Comparison of Pre- and Post-Revolution Newspaper Prospectuses

Findings in research that compared newspaper prospectuses published before and after the revolution are presented in three sections, as follows: 1) statements on political information as a category of newspaper content; 2) statements on journalistic relationships to politics and politicians; and finally, 3) comments on the power and utility of newspapers. These sections of the paper discuss these three themes, providing examples that illustrate the characteristics of the statements.

Journalists' Enhanced Role as Providers of Political Information

Some journalists' post-Revolutionary War prospectus statements reflect a possible understanding that they played an enhanced role as providers of political information in America. Few establishers of newspapers before the 1760s specifically mention that they would provide political information or discuss themselves as being important providers of such information. Of the 21 early prospectuses, six specifically mentioned political information; and within this group of six, two statements were issued after the Stamp Act crisis, a time recognized by many historians as the symbolic start of the Revolution.[27] In contrast, a larger proportion of the post-Revolutionary War prospectuses, 23 out of 29, specifically discussed the various ways the newspapers would serve their communities as providers of various categories of political information.[28]

One of this group of 23, newspaper journalist Alden Spooner, promised readers on the 7 August 1983 establishment of his Vermont Journal, to provide them with essays and editorial statements on political subjects. In his words, the Journal would include: "the productions of the Literarti, on political or moral subjects. . . . decent remarks on public measures, candidly stated, and calculated to reform government."

A second example included that issued 11 March 1784 by William Warden and Benjamin Russell, as they set out to launch the Massachusetts Centinel and Republican Journal. Accordingly, they promised:

> "The Publishers engage to use every effort to obtain, and the most serutinous [sic] circumspection in collecting and adjusting whatever may be thought of publick benefit, or private amusement; variety shall be courted in all its shapes, in the importance of political information . . . .

Another such statement was issued by publishers Kline and Reynolds, who on 17 August 1785 sought to establish the Carlisle [Pennsylvania] Gazette and Western Repository of Knowledge. According to these publishers:

> The press at this place promises every possible public adantage. Through this channel----the communication of knowledge is facilitated,----every member of the community has it in his power to scrutinize, with candour [sic], the characters of men in office, and to examine, with _____the measures of government----to detect fraud and ____ and to expose them, stripped of their meretricious covering, to public view.

The larger number of journalists who stressed their role as providers of such political information would seem to indicate a recognition among some members of the journalistic occupational group that they were playing a more decidedly political communication role than they had before the Revolution.

Journalistic Relationships to Politics and Politicians

In addition to an increase in their articulations of roles as providers of political communication, post-Revolution journalists also increasingly discussed their political positions, affiliations, and political-related editorial policies. Of the 21 pre-Revolutionary War newspaper prospectuses studied, four discussed the newspaper's political sentiments (all but one during the period following the 1765 Stamp Act). But of the 29 post-War prospectuses examined, 17 discussed relationships to politicians, politics, and/or editorial policies in relation to political matters.

Several examples included the Newport [Rhode Island] Gazette's new proprietor, Peter Edes, a printer who had earlier started papers at Boston and Haverhill, Massachusetts, and at Augusta and Bangor, Maine.[29] Expressing his political independence, on the first day of March, 1787 Edes described how he would treat political content:

> . . . while the personal invectives of man against man will be always excluded, his paper shall ever be open to the different politicians of the day. . . [and] open to the different politicians of the day.

And a second journalist who discussed the standards he would use in handling political material was Andrew Brown, who on his 16 October 1788 establishment of Philadelphia's Federal Gazette, said his paper would be ". . . open to writers on both sides of every political or other question, so long as they are governed by decency."

While explanations concerning newspaper publishers' had before been included in prospectuses by journalists, after the revolution it appears possible that journalists increasingly felt the need to explain their positions. Although the members of both groups were involved in the tasks of issuing political information in newspapers before, during, and after the revolution, there likely was an increase in demand for the services of both groups throughout that period. And considering Americans' distrust of politics and politicians, such closeness likely needed explaining.

Comments on the Power and Utility of Newspapers

A third indicator that the American Revolution may have contributed to a shift in newspaper journalists' thinking about their occupation was an increase in the number of statements that included explicit references in prospectuses as to the benefits brought to Americans by of newspapers and journalists. Before the American Revolution, such statements were rare. For example, in 21 pre-war prospectuses examined, one journalistic author, Samuel Hall, mentioned the press' utility, as he sought to establish the Essex Gazette at Salem, Massachusetts in 1768.[30] But more such statements appeared in the post-Revolution prospectuses studied. Of the 29 post-Revolution prospectuses studied, 13 included statements about the utility of newspapers. For example, William Warden and Benjamin Russell, in proposals to publish the Massachusetts Centinel at Boston in 1784, commented on how important the press was to the preservation of democracy: "The Liberty of the Press is the surest bulwark of the people's rights, a privilege to mankind which tyrannical monarchs have beheld with horror and often attempted to annihilate."[31]

Josiah Meigs,[32] who later managed the Middlesex Gazette for publishers Woodward and Green, at the establishment of the Essex Gazette, at Middletown, Massachusetts, commented at length about the benefits of newspapers in his prospectus. Among his comments was the claim that newspapers could benefit the citizenry even more than other forms of political communication:

> The advantages of newspapers are too well known to need a particular recital: it may be said in general, that a well regulated News Paper [sic] furnishes a rational Entertainment for the Moments of Relaxation from Business or Labour; that it facilitates and cultivates Commerce; that it is beneficial to agriculture and manufacturers, that it is favourable to Morals, Virtue and Literature, and, as the greatest of its Excellencies, that it is absolutely necessary for the Preservation of Freedom in a Republican Government, such a paper supplying precisely the place of the censorial power in ancient Rome, an office of the highest Dignity in that glorious Republic, the execution of which required the integrity and wisdom of Cato. In a word, the excellent Art of printing enables the publisher of such a paper to entertain or interest, at once, greater multitudes than those which heard the Orators of Greece or Rome.[33]

One of the prospectuses studied mentioned the role of the press in the American Revolution specifically. On their establishment in 1793 of the Massachusetts Mercury, printers and publishers Young and Etheridge printed the following statement:

> At no period, since the discovery of printing, has there ever been so interesting an era as the present. . . And while the historian is ____ employed to delineate her progress in Arms and Arts, the Printer of a weekly Paper, if faithful to his trust, furnishes in the minutiae of successive detail, events less splendid than those which adore the historic page, but vastly more interesting to the present actors in the theater of existence. Newspapers, originally fanned that favored flame of Liberty, which first was kindled on the Columbian Altar, and from thence with unexampled rapidity has spread to the furthest bourne [sic] of

> Europe, illuminating the universe of Man in its progress, and giving freedom to myriads of lives.[34]

Discussion

Statements found in newspaper prospectuses suggest that the American Revolution's replacement of the colony's elite political communication system with a more democratic one brought changes not just to newspaper columns; it also precipitated development in the journalistic occupation as well. Statements identified in prospectuses issued after the American Revolution indicated a possible growing concern among the members of the group about their journalistic political roles and work. For example, more post-Revolution journalists than their earlier counterparts discussed categories of political information they planned to include in newspapers, their roles as disseminators of political information, and their relationships with politicians.

This suggests that the more democratic political communication system ushered in by the American Revolution may have fueled the first significant wave of journalistic occupational development, although such clearly did not yet afford journalists any clear authority over their work. While the American Revolution may have played a key role in the process whereby journalists became more firmly ensconced next to politicians in the political communication system, it also placed journalists in a position where, if they were going to become more clearly defined as an occupation, they would have to differentiate themselves from politicians to do so. Indeed, part of the revolution involved the citizenry's establishment of a more open and democratic political communication system based on a different set of ideals than those that dominated in the previous more restricted system. But a more open system did not necessarily automatically lead to an environment wherein journalists, rather than politicians, would be accepted as the proper purveyors of political information. In fact, while the revolution may have led journalists to believe they had a special calling to serve Americans as crucial providers of certain categories of political communication, the decades following it are more often recognized as an era wherein they were to be dominated by politicians.

While the United States Constitution Bill of Rights included an amendment giving the press some measure of protection as disseminators of communication, the lessons of the subsequent Alien and Sedition Acts were that it would take more than such a formal constitutional structure alone to enable journalists to gain fuller jurisdiction over their work. Only when the people of the country recognized a need for political communication that they believed journalists, rather than politicians, ought to fulfill, could the journalistic group begin to achieve some measure of jurisdiction over such work. In short, while the revolution afforded journalists some small measure of occupational authority, to become fully in control of their work they would have to struggle with politicians to carve out a niche for themselves as gatherers, writers, and editors of political information in the form of news stories, editorials, and political analysis.

Notes:

[1] Isaiah Thomas, The History of Printing in America, with a Biography of Printers. 2d ed. rprt. New York: B. Franklin, 1967, 251-5.

[2] Works that study the nature and role of the American Revolutionary War newspaper press include: Stephen Botein, "Printers and the American Revolution," Bernard Bailyn and John B. Hench, eds. The Press and the American Revolution (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1980); Carol Sue Humphrey, This Popular Engine: New England Newspapers During the American Revolution: 1775-1789 (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1992); Arthur M. Schlesinger, Prelude to Independence; Philip Davidson, Propaganda and the American Revolution (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941); Moses C. Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763-1783 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1897).

Other historians studied how the press became structurally tied to politics and government after the war. For example, see Culver H. Smith, The Press, Politics and Patronage (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1977); Donald H. Stewart, The Opposition Press of the Federalist Period (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1969).

Among the various works that discuss whether colonial and post-colonial printers had a clearly developed theory of freedom of the press include these: Jeffery A. Smith, Printers and Press Freedom: The Ideology of Early American Journalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Leonard W. Levy, Emergence of a Free Press (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[3] Among those that do study multiple biographies of eighteenth-century newspaper journalists include Thomas, History of Printing; Humphrey, This Popular Engine; Benjamin Franklin, Boston Printers, Publishers and Booksellers: 1640-1800 (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1980); Peter Parker, "The Philadelphia Printer: A Study of an Eighteenth Century Businessman," Business History Review 40 (Spring 1966): 24-6; Susan Henry, "Private Lives: An Added Dimension for Understanding Journalism History," Journalism History 6 (Winter 1979-80): 98-102.

[4] The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Labor

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 143-4. Other political systems disturbances would include any broad shift in the political party structure or other major political organizational developments, as well as more predictable kinds of events such as elections, political disputes, scandals, and so on.

[5] George A. Donohue, Phillip J. Tichenor, and Clarice N. Olien *Community Conflict and the Press* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980); Hazel Dicken-Garcia, *Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth-Century America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), Figure 1.1, 13.

[6] P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (London: Allen Lane, 1966); Stuart Hall, D. Hobson, and P. Willis, eds., *Culture, Media, Language* (London: Hutchinson, 1980); Raymond Williams, *Communications* (Harmondsworth: Penquin, 1962); James Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

[7] Other examples of journalistic statements that embodied constructions of the occupation and its work included libel courtroom testimony, autobiographies, newspaper advertisements and masthead statements, obituaries, histories of newspapers, speeches, and so on. See Patricia L. Dooley, "Development of American Journalistic Work in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: Politicians, Political Communication, and Occupational Boundaries," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Minnesota, 1994), 71-9.

[8] For further biographical information on Campbell and his newspaper, see Charles E. Clark, *The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 77-102.

[9] For a description of the emergence of newspapers in the first half of the eighteenth century, see Clark, 103-22. America's second colonial newspaper did not appear until 1719, when William Brooker began publishing the *Boston Gazette*.

Englanders had developed their earliest newspaper prototypes, *corantos*, in London in the 1620s, and their first true newspaper, the *Oxford Gazette*, was established in 1665. See Edwin and Michael Emery, *The Press in America*, 7th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1992), 9-11, as well as the following: George Boyce, James Curran, and Pauline Wingate, eds., *Newspaper History: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present Day* (London: Constable; Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978); G. A. Cranfield, *The Press and Society: From Caxton to Northcliffe* (reprinted, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978); Joseph Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper* (Cambridge: Harvard

University Press, 1961); Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Prsses, 1987); Michael Harris and Allen Lee, eds., *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (Rutherford, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1986); Allen Hutt, *The Changing Newspaper: Typographic Trends in Britain and America, 1622-1972* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1973); Fredrick Seaton Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1622* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952); James Southerland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); R. M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1965).

[10] Arthur Salz, "Occupation." In *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* 1933-1935 ed., s.v.

[11] Dooley, "Development of American Journalistic Work," 109-22.

[12] Botein, "Meer Mechanics," 141-2; Mary Ann Yodelis Smith, "Who Paid the Piper? Publishing Economics in Boston, 1763-1775," *Journalism Monographs* 38 (February 1975).

[13] Everett C. Hughes, *Men and Their Work* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1958, 133; Elliot Freidson, *Profession of Medicine: A Study of the Sociology of Applied Knowledge* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1970), 71.

[14] For accounts of early newspaper printing apprenticeships, see Lawrence C. Wroth, *The Colonial Printer* (Portland, Maine: Southworth-Anthoensen Press, 1938; Humphrey, *This Popular Engine*; Milton W. Hamilton, *The Country Printer: New York State, 1785-1830* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), as well as in autobiograhies of early newspaper journalists like Benjamin Franklin.

[15] William H. Form, "Occupations and Careers." In *International Encyclopedia of The Social Sciences*. 1968 ed., s.v.

[16] Patricia Bradley, "No 'Meer Mechanic:' William Bradford and the Search for Legitimacy," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Journalism Historians Association, Philadelphia, 1991, 2. See also Botein, "'Meer Mechanics,'" 140-7.

[17] Ibid., 140.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Terry C. Blum, Paul M. Roman, and Deborah M. Tootle. "The Emergence of an Occupation," *Work and Occupations* 15 (February 1988): 96-114.

[20] Gieryn, Bevins, and Zehr, "Professionalization;" Kronus, "Evolution of Occupational Power;" Runcie, "Occupational Communication."

[21] Dooley, "Development of American Journalistic Work," reports on research that examined more than 300 newspapers established from 1704 to the early-twentieth century. Such such research, only several of the journalists did not issue some form of an introductory statement to their potential readers.

[22] James Franklin, for example, said this as he established the *New England Courant*, in Boston, in 1721.

[23] Since no statements of early printers and publishers about why they chose to print prospectuses have been uncovered in archives or other collections of letters or other materials, one can only surmise as to the various reasons why they were developed.

[24] Such a practice was at times discussed in the prospectuses published in newspapers, and appears to have been common from the start. It is doubtful that many of these early handbills have survived, although several were included in the microfilm editions of these newspapers. Other surviving examples of handbill-type prospectuses from the nineteenth century are found in the broadsides collection of the American Antiquarian Society.

[25] Dooley, "Development of American Journalistic Work," especially chapter five.

[26] The year 1783 was when the Treaty of Paris was signed. The group studied consisted of 29 prospectuses issued in Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Maryland, Ohio, South Carolina, Maine, and New Jersey, between 1783 and 1800.

[27] Such included newspapers first issued in the following years: 1727, 1742, 1756, 1764, 1767, and 1771.

[28] list

[29] Thomas, *History of Printing*, 136-7, 293-4.

[30] See 2 August 1768, 1. Hall said:

> Although the Printing Business [sic] is but

> just introduced into this town and county, and consequently this paper is the first publication of the kind that has been printed here; yet there can be no doubt but that every inhabitant is sufficiently sensible that the exercise of this art is of the utmost importance to every community; and that newspapers, in particular, are of great public utility.

[31] Issued on 1 March 1784 within Warden's and Russell's separately-printed and disseminated "Proposals for publishing. . . a free, uninfluenced newspaper. . . . "

[32] For more on Josiah Meigs, see Humphrey, That Popular Engine, 57, and Franklin B. Dexter, Biographical Sketches of The Graduates of Yale College With Annals of the College History 6 vols. (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1885-1912) 4:43-47.

[33] 8 November 1785, 1.

[34] 1 January 1793, 1.

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TRADE, TREACHERY, AND DAILY NECESSITIES:
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEA TO COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS

by

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ABSTRACT

Title: Trade, Treachery, and Daily Necessities: The Significance of the Sea to Colonial Newspapers

Abstract: This research deals with all facets of the news of the sea that were presented in colonial newspapers from 1690-1775 by looking at approximately 7,400 editions of all newspapers of the period available on micofilm. News of the sea often related brief but essential items that told of arrivals and departures of ships, and this news was vital to life in the ports of America. But the news of the sea that appeared in colonial newspapers also possessed a sensational side. Newspapers reported on pirate activity and ship wrecks throughout the colonial period. This type of ship news was often quite extended in its length, detailed in its description of fighting or methods of survival, and could fill a page or more in a newspaper. For many colonists in America, sea travel was a necessity, and the constant reports of ship wrecks and barbarous pirates lurking in hidden coves just outside of colonial ports heightened the apprehension that accompanied this type of travel. This type of news about the sea, although not as prominent as the basic news of departures, arrivals, ship cargoes, and custom house reports, remained a feature of colonial newspapers. The fact that both types of ship news played such vital roles in the content of colonial newspapers demonstrates the value of shipping news as both a source of critical information in the colonial period and as the topic of news.

TRADE, TREACHERY, AND DAILY NECESSITIES: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEA TO COLONIAL NEWSPAPERS

> After a long Dearth of News, we have, by the late Ships, received English Papers to the 12th of November.
>
> *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 22 January 1745

In January 1745, Benjamin Franklin was no doubt worried. It had been several weeks since ships entering the Philadelphia harbor had contained any information resembling news. A winter storm now forced all ships to remain at the wharf on the Delaware River. The same storm kept other ships at sea. Further complicating the situation, England and Spain were at war, and Spanish privateers constantly patrolled the waters of the Atlantic that led to American ports. Finally around January 22, several ships made their way up river to Philadelphia. A relieved Franklin reported the ships' arrival but lamented that war meant that newspapers had to go "sometimes Months without having a Syllable" of fresh news to print.[1]

Franklin's dilemma of 1745 was common among the printers of colonial America. Even though printers had a number of sources for receiving news including overland mail routes, most of the news that appeared in the newspapers reached the hands of printers via ships. When shipping was interrupted for any reason, the flow of information ceased as well. Shipping and newspapers, therefore, became mutually dependent. Merchants needed a way to inform people that they had goods lately arrived by ship. In turn, printers needed ships to bring news from Europe and other colonies. For newspapers, the situation was profitable; they received commercial news even if a ship brought no foreign newspapers or news from other American colonies.

While ships were newspapers' greatest link to information, the ships also provided newspapers with their largest single news topic. It would be nearly impossible to read any edition of a colonial newspaper without finding some news relating to ships, shipping, or the sea. Hundreds of news items appeared each year that dealt directly with ship news and news of the sea. In fact, America's newspapers in 1720, the *Boston News-Letter*, the *Boston Gazette*, and the *American Weekly Mercury*, printed on average 220 items of sea news during that twelve-month period. The average number of news items concerning the sea did not begin to decrease until American nonimportation agreements and British embargoes in the 1770s greatly limited the shipping of the American colonies, yet even news of nonimportation agreements and embargoes was news of the sea.

News of the sea could be as exciting and sensational as a first-hand account of a ship and crew adrift at sea without provisions that included the cannibalistic way those on board remained alive, and it could describe for readers the way in which America's shipping lanes were "infested by those Hell-hounds the Pirates,"[2] those roving sea thieves who murdered, robbed, and plundered cargo ships from Newfoundland to the Caribbean. News of the sea could also be as mundane as a "Vessel lately arrived from England,"[3] a typical example of the way in which colonial newspapers informed readers that a ship had entered harbor.[4] While the first type of sea news may have entertained readers more, the second was of immense importance to the citizens throughout the colonies. Overseas commerce made colonial life both comfortable and possible. Foreign trade allowed colonists to earn money to purchase European goods, and the accessibility of these goods in turn made America attractive to emigrants from Europe.[5]

This research deals with all facets of the news of the sea that were presented in colonial newspapers from 1690-1775 by looking at approximately 7,400 editions of all newspapers of the period available on micofilm.[6] News of the sea often related brief but essential items that told of arrivals and departures of ships, and this news was vital to life in the ports of America.[7] But the news of the sea that appeared in colonial newspapers also possessed a sensational side. Newspapers reported on pirate activity and ship wrecks throughout the colonial period. This type of ship news was often quite extended in its length, detailed in its description of fighting or methods of survival, and could fill a page or more in a newspaper. For many colonists in America, sea travel was a necessity, and the constant reports of ship wrecks and barbarous pirates lurking in hidden coves just outside of colonial ports heightened the apprehension that accompanied this type of travel. This type of news about the sea, although not as prominent as the basic news of departures, arrivals, ship cargoes, and custom house reports, remained a feature of colonial newspapers. The fact that both types of ship news played such vital roles in the content of colonial newspapers demonstrates the value of shipping news as both a source of critical information in the colonial period and as the topic of news. Before exploring the news of the sea in the papers, however, a brief discussion of trade routes, British trading policies, and length of time required for ships to reach ports in America may shed some light on the strong tie that existed between colonial commerce and news.

Shipping and Trade in Colonial America

From the beginning of the eighteenth century to 1775, the population of the American colonies increased ninefold.[8] Although many of those new settlers joined in a westward migration away from the coast into what the colonists called the "backcountry," their sights were firmly fixed on Europe.[9] The colonists of eighteenth-century America perceived their future—that is their welfare both physically and financially—not to the West but back across the Atlantic Ocean. Maintaining contact with the European way of life was paramount. Sea travel, therefore, was of extreme importance.

Successful navigation of the Atlantic to America was extremely important in England, too. Within fifteen years of the settlement of Jamestown, British merchants realized that there was a great deal of money to be made off the resources of the colonies, especially through the importation of the "stinking custom" of tobacco products.[10] England saw tremendous monetary potential in her American colonies and set in place commercial legislation that gave the kingdom a monopoly on trade with the colonies. Other European countries were not precluded from enjoying the bounteous resources of British colonial America; they were, however, required to use English merchant ships for all exchanges.[11] This monopolistic practice ultimately encouraged smuggling by colonial American merchants, especially illegal trade with the French.[12] Because of the British monopoly on trade, American merchants in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century were often unable to obtain the best prices for their goods, having to settle for whatever was offered by British trading companies. Much greater profit, especially in the purchasing of goods, was available through deals with the buccaneers who sailed the Caribbean and robbed ships, principally Spanish vessels. Colonial merchants, through tacit approval by government officials, were "allowed" to trade with pirates.[13]

Growing production of American crops and the need for laborers to work in producing and harvesting them helped American trade slowly outgrow the need to deal with pirates. By the second third of the century, trade was flourishing, due in part to increased tobacco and slave trade.[14] Another reason that American merchants no longer needed to trade with pirates was based upon Europe's difficulty in providing sufficient amounts of food for its citizenry, necessitating the importation of American rice and wheat for survival at prices that greatly favored American interests.[15]

The growing economic ties with Europe furthered American concern in European activities and created a desire for increased and more quickly received European news. At the same time, most American ports developed significant trade among themselves.[16] Events from Boston, Massachusetts, to Charleston, South Carolina, and eventually from St. Johns, Nova Scotia, to Savannah, Georgia, therefore, would be of interest to citizens all along the Atlantic seaboard. The faster information and goods could be transported, the better informed and financially successful colonial citizens and their communities could be.[17]

But how fast could news possibly travel by sailing ship? By 1735, the average age of a London news story appearing in a Boston or Philadelphia newspaper was between eighty-five and ninety-five days.[18] By 1740, an avenue of "constant communication" existed, provided England was not at war with another European nation. Sailing time decreased to five weeks to Newfoundland and eight weeks to the Caribbean from England.[19] In addition, growing maritime commerce increased transatlantic news flow 300 percent.[20]

The American colonies also greatly increased intercolonial trade in the second third of the eighteenth century. Ships from New England regularly put in at ports in the Middle Colonies on their way to and from the lucrative rum-slave trade in the West Indies.[21] News placed on a ship in New England could reach New York in four days, Philadelphia in five, To communicate with Annapolis from New England required a week at sea, provided no other ports of call were mandated. Ten days sailing was needed to reach Williamsburg.[22]

News traveling further south than Williamsburg needed additional time at sea because of the distance to the next important port in the Southern Colonies—New Bern—and because of the hazardous waters and shoals around Hatteras, North Carolina. A voyage from New England to New Bern could be covered in fifteen days. Another five days were needed to reach Charleston. Ships traveling from Boston to Savannah required at least five to six weeks.[23]

No matter the age of news received by ships, it generally fell into two categories, that which might be termed news of daily necessities and sensational sea news, that which dealt with ship wrecks and pirate and privateer attacks. Both types of news provided readers with valuable information. The latter, however, added treachery and barbarity to newspapers. Both types give us an insight into the importance of ships and the sea to colonial America as a source of well-being for the colonies as a source of news.

The Sea and Colonial Newspapers

News of the Sea: Daily Necessities. The *Boston News-Letter* stated on January 14, 1706, that "a Vessel lately arrived here from England." The one-line news item said nothing about the cargo of the ship. It probably brought prints of some London newspapers and assorted commodities for purchase by the citizens of Massachusetts Bay. The transatlantic carrier could have been filled with important personages who made the trip in order to attend the wedding of Governor Jonathan Belcher and Mary Partridge, daughter of the colony's late Lieutenant Governor, William Partridge.[24] Whatever or whoever was on board, the arrival of the ship was worth noting, as was news that privateers continued to attack ships in the Caribbean.

To printers of colonial newspapers, ships first and foremost meant news, as both a source and a topic.[25] In the winter of 1730, Andrew Bradford despaired of the fact that news that he could print in his *American Weekly Mercury* was scarce. He asked a friend to help him secure any news possible to print since he was experiencing "a Time when fresh Advices from Abroad cannot be had."[26] In return, Bradford received an essay on women from his friend, and that occupied the first two pages and part of the third in the week's edition.

The arrival of a ship in port sometimes provided news that had immediate repercussions for the port, merchants, and ship crews alike. In such cases the ship was both the source and topic of news. Ships arriving in American ports often traveled to Europe, Africa and the Caribbean before docking in the colonies and provide a good example of this dualism. At each stop, cargo was exchanged, and often the crew or cargo on board the ship became infected with some type of disease. Such an infected ship arrived in Boston in November 1730, and the *New-England Weekly Journal* gave notice that the ship had been placed in quarantine and not allowed to dock. Merchants, shippers looking to hire crews for a voyage, and the citizens of the city were all given fair warning to steer clear of the ship, its crew and cargo.[27]

In the same manner, newspapers warned outbound ships loaded with merchandise or passengers to avoid certain ports. Ships entering Boston harbor in March and May 1735 alerted other vessels and port authorities to bypass North Carolina ports from Ocracoke Island southward because "Pestilential Distemper" was spreading among the region's citizens.

In addition, it would be unwise to allow ships coming from North Carolina to enter port.[28] Similarly, the *Connecticut Journal* warned of plague in Hispaniola. Only that colony needed to be avoided in the Caribbean, however, since "the Disorder was not bro't from any infected Place, but supposed to originate there."[29]

The majority of ship news that appeared in the papers was much more "ordinary" than warnings of quarantined ships and disease-infested ports that ships needed to avoid. It told of ships arriving, loading and departing like this *Boston Gazette* notice:

> On the 12th Capt. Hayes Ship Benjamin Arrived here from Barbadoes, and Coden from Rhode Island. Capt. Barrington [on the ship] Sheppard will sail hence for London about the 10th of January, being now half loaded and the rest ready. Coden sails this day for Rhode Island.[30]

Other regular features of colonial newspaper ship news included custom house reports, the price current for goods at individual ports and tides. Custom house reports listed the names of ships entered into a port, ships cleared for departure and ships that had departed. Many times, newspapers ran custom house reports from several cities. In the *Boston Gazette*'s first year of publication, it regularly provided readers with reports from Boston, as well as the custom houses in New York, Philadelphia, New London, Salem, Portsmouth, Burlington, and the ports of Rhode Island.[31] As the availability of news increased during the colonial period, custom house reports were sometimes omitted in order to place news from other colonies and Europe into newspapers.

The "Price Currant" of goods allowed merchants to know the going rate for imported or exported items from individual ports. The current price of goods included staples necessary for survival like flour, corn, and bread, and it included exported items peculiar to the region. The *South-Carolina Gazette* regularly listed the current prices for naval stores—tar, pitch, and turpentine—and rice.[32] After Charleston grew into a major shipping center, printer Peter Timothy produced a standard weekly column called "Timothy's Marine List," which included imports, exports, custom house ledgers, price current, tides, and the week's weather.[33] Because ships could better leave a port at high tide, many papers listed the high tides for the week, along with the price current just below the nameplate.[34]

At times, the "ordinary" news was mixed with news of extraordinary social cargo. When the *Sea-Horse* arrived in Boston on October 11, 1720, William Burnet, the "Governour of New York and New-Jersey"[35] was the "merchandise of note." In the midst of war news in 1775, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* informed the city that John Hancock and his bride had arrived to visit.[36] Sometimes the cargo was extraordinary but unwanted. That was the case with numerous boat loads of British convicts sent to America by order of the British government.[37]

Ships entering the ports of colonial America formed an informational network that kept each port apprised of the shipping situation throughout the Atlantic. *Publick Occurrences* provided news of a safe harbor for British ships in Tobago.[38] When a Brigantine docked in Annapolis after sailing from Barbados, the captain advised "that the West-India Fleets from England and Ireland, were safe arrived" in Barbados.[39] Ships often brought news of other ships outfitting at ports that they had just departed. Similar news was received second-hand from ships met at sea. This news let merchants and others know that ships that had been sent out earlier from particular ports had arrived safely. It also notified them that ships could be expected in the near future. If the ships did not dock at specified ports within a reasonable amount of time, it could be assumed that some harm had befallen them at sea.[40]

The informational network was especially sensitive to the conditions found on the various shipping routes that could hamper or even curtail trade ships. In February 1745, for example, the *New-York Evening-Post* forewarned shippers that storms were currently interrupting shipping to Virginia, Barbados, and St. Kitts, while at the same time French vessels were cruising all through the Caribbean making prizes of ships sailing under British colors.[41] Ships sometimes were successful at maneuvering through gales at sea; other times they were lost.[42]

Because of the precarious nature of the weather and the ocean, news of ship wrecks, lost cargo and drownings appeared in colonial newspapers frequently. Just how perilous ventures into the ocean were both physically and financially was summed up in a *Connecticut Journal* news story in January 1770:

> The Number of Vessels, belonging to this Place, which have been lost since January, 1768, is as follows, viz. 3 Fishing Schooners in 1768, 13 Ditto in Spring, 1769; 3 Ditto last Fall. 4 Sail of Merchantmen. Total 23 Sail, & all the Men belonging to them, amounting to 160 Whites, and 2 Negroes, (besides some Strangers belonging to the Merchantmen, of whom no Account has been kept) were lost. The Number of Widows left by these Men were 70, with 155 Children. The Value of the Interest lost, amounting to £14124-8.[43]

Often, the crew was forced to "cast away," or abandon, a ship in order to save themselves. A large storm hit England in November 1703, and it forced the casting away of "3 or 4 Merchant Ships" at Plymouth as well as ships from eight more ports on the island.[44] Ships arriving in Boston from Jamaica reported seeing the entire London fleet in tatters in Cuba. The unstable August weather of the Caribbean had wreaked havoc upon the British sailing vessels, and Captain Masse of the ship *Maremaid* said that he "saw the Wrecks, and the Shore covered with dead Bodies."[45]

Although many of the ships damaged at sea were English vessels, their destruction or loss of cargo affected the colonies. A snow, the largest of the two-masted vessels to ply the oceans in the eighteenth century,[46] the *Maryland Gazette* informed, had recently left Virginia bound for London. Navigating into the ocean, she was "stranded on the Back of the Isle of Wight, and the whole Cargo lost, but the Crew were saved." The cargo included 314 hogsheads of tobacco grown, cured, and loaded by Virginians.[47] When ships were stranded or run ashore in storms, the crew and cargo could sometimes be saved, but the vessels themselves usually were destroyed.[48]

Even when the ocean was calm, ships were not completely safe from nature's threats. In 1755, a boat loaded with fish discovered that fact. The ship "met with a Mountain of Ice, and it being calm, she could not get clear, but was drove against it by the Current, by which the Vessel received so much Damage that she sunk directly." The six-member crew survived six days in a life boat before being picked up by a French ship bound for Spain.[49] And it was not only icebergs that sank ships at sea in nonstormy weather. Ships sometimes—despite the immense size of the Atlantic—could not avoid one another. The ship *America*, for one, sank to the bottom of the ocean after colliding with another boat in 1770.[50]

With all the danger that the weather and sea combined to inflict upon ships, their cargoes, and crews, it is no wonder that crews would implore God for safe sailing or offer thanks for deliverance from situations of imminent danger. The crew of the *Grafton* offered words of thanks after a narrow escape:

> TO Thee our Thanks, O great JEHOVAH's due,
> Accept it then from all the Grafton's Crew;
> Who for thy great Assistance did implore,
> To help us off a dang'rous rocky Shore.

Thou heard'st our Cries, it did thy Favour gain,
Expell'd our Fears, and bid us live again.
While GOD's our Friend, and he the Helm doth steer,
No Rocks, no Shoals, no Dangers need we fear.[51]

The dangers of sea travel were no less for the fishing fleets that plied the waters from New England to Greenland searching for fish and whales. Whalers often "were lost among the Ice" as they followed schools of the migrating animals toward Greenland and further north.[52] Whales, especially, were a valuable commodity in America. The oil made from their blubber was used to light lamps, and whalers from Nantucket alone provided three thousand barrels of oil in 1730, thirty thousand in 1775.[53] But whaling was a dangerous occupation. A Nantucket sloop ventured out in May 1720 and quickly "fell in with a Scool [*sic*] of Sperma Cetæ Whales,"[54] the richest of all whale species in their yield of oil.[55] One sperm whale that had already been taken by the sloop produced a dozen barrels of oil and a large amount of ivory from the teeth, but successfully landing an animal that reached lengths of sixty feet with only iron harpoons was difficult. When the harpoon sank into the whale, it dove toward the bottom pulling the small rowboat containing the whalers with it. The whalers were left "a sprawling and swiming [*sic*] for life." They were saved, but the whale eluded capture.[56]

Fishing as an industry was important in both America and Europe. When the price of fish dropped in Europe, it was news in America. The *American Weekly Mercury* learned through private letters "that Fish bears nothing of a Price in any of the Ports in the Mediterranean" and from a ship captain "that the Price for Fish is exceeding low in Foreign Markets."[57] But the price of ocean produce did not remain low, and a *Pennsylvania Gazette* essay from London intimated that the rich fishing grounds that stretched from New England to Newfoundland were a prime cause for the French and Indian War. The cod fisheries, the essay declared, meant so much to England that "his gracious Majesty, our Sovereign, drew the Sword" to protect England's interest in them from the French.[58]

Even after America revolted against English rule, the politics of fishing found a place in American papers. The *North Carolina Gazette* of New Bern filled all of page one and part of page two on June 16, 1775, with Parliament's discussion of a fishing bill. Every other piece of information in the paper—with the exception of a short poem on beauty—dealt with the war and the provincial politics surrounding it.

Because of the necessity of sea travel, inventors and scientists of the colonial period continually attempted to improve ships and the instruments used to navigate the oceans. The *Boston Evening-Post*, for example, announced that an experiment was being conducted in London on a new design of ship that could not be sunk, even when it filled with water.[59] Another London inventor claimed to have developed a new set of instruments that would continue to point out directions in all types of weather.[60] And doctors and scientists continually professed to have perfected a treatment for the boards used to build ships that would keep worms and rot out of the wood. In 1740, one Searl Knowles "found a wonderful Expedient to hinder the Worms penetrating into Ship Plank."[61] Yet a decade later, the *Boston Evening-Post* proclaimed that "Mr. George Bridges, the famous Bug-Doctor . . . tried his Experiment in Deptford Yard, on six different Sorts of Timber, in order to prevent the Worms from boring Holes in Ships Bottoms." The news item claimed that if Bridges was successful, it would be "the first of its Kind ever discovered in Europe."[62]

All of the claims for improvements in ships and navigation, however, proved to be only claims. Ships continued to sink, rot, and become lost on transatlantic voyages. Shipping was a daily necessity in colonial America, and the large amount of "ordinary" news concerning the sea affirms the importance of ship trade and the goods that they procured for the colonies. Shipping was so important that Massachusetts issued a proclamation to protect it from the marauding French in 1755.[63]

Even with all this emphasis on ship arrivals, departures, and the like, all of the news of the sea that appeared in colonial newspapers was not presented for such bland but vital informational purposes. Much of the news of the sea was filled with gruesome brutality and stark realism. That news of the sea was anything but "ordinary"; a very different type of news from the waters of the Atlantic also emerged from the pages the colonial newspapers.

News of the Sea: Disaster, Treachery, and Sensationalism. In the last edition of the *Boston News-Letter* printed in 1720, one of John Campbell's news items lamented the fact that "those Hell-hounds the Pirates" had returned to torment ships trading in the Caribbean.[64] Pirates, the self-declared enemies of the whole world, had been a threat to shipping and the lives of ship crews in the West Indies for a century.[65] Since around 1692, pirate activity had increased greatly in the region, and the buccaneers, who originally attacked Spanish vessels almost exclusively, now waged war on any merchant vessel so unlucky to be discovered entering the region.[66]

News of pirate activity made quick and interesting reading in the colonial newspapers. And Ian Steele postulates that the colonial newspapers helped to stifle piracy after 1720 through their detailed printing of the names of pirate vessels and descriptions of the executions of pirates.[67] Pirate news was valuable information for the readers of colonial newspapers, but it was anything but ordinary.

Several works, including John Esquemeling's *The Buccaneers of America* and *The General History of Pyrates*, had been sold in England and America since 1684.[68] These works painted a graphic picture of the way pirates dealt with those they captured. Typical torture of a prisoner was described by Esquemeling:

> [T]hey soon after hung him up, giving him infinite blows and stripes, while he was under that intolerable pain and posture of body. Afterwards they cut off his nose and ears, and singed his face with burning straw, till he could speak nor lament his misery no longer. Then losing all hopes of hearing any confession from his mouth, they commanded a negro to run him through with a lance. . . . After this execrable manner did many others of those miserable prisoners finish their days, the common sport and recreation of these Pirates being these and other tragedies not inferior.[69]

Newspaper readers, therefore, already knew of the horrors that could be expected if a ship's crew was captured by pirates. The most horrible news of pirate barbarity could rarely find its way into the newspapers because very few lived to report it.

Three types of pirate news appeared, and all three played upon the vivid descriptions of pirate brutality offered by the histories of pirates. The first reported pirate activity. This news offered few graphic descriptions of pirate activity; it merely warned ships to be alert. Around 1740, however, this type of news gradually changed more into news of French and Spanish privateers who raided ships flying the English flag, and the descriptions in this news were often quite graphic in their portrayal of fighting and brutality. A second type of pirate news mentioned by Steele related the accounts of trials and executions of pirates. The third type described pirate activity and the treatment of prisoners whenever captives were fortunate enough to live to report it.

By the eighteenth century, pirate activity was not confined to the West Indies. Pirates roamed the Atlantic in search of booty and places to trade. Reports of their activity as far north as Newfoundland turned up in the newspapers as a warning for ships. "Our Coast is again infested with those Common Enemy of Mankind the Pirates," a *Boston News-Letter* notice from Canada proclaimed. Ships arriving in Boston noted that one pirate sloop "had taken Thirteen Sail of French and English Fishing Ships in One day, and has us'd the Men very Barbarously."[70] Because American shipping activity encompassed the whole Atlantic, notices of pirate activity anywhere were valuable. A Jamaican letter warned ships involved in the African slave trade to avoid the Gamboa River in Gambia because "nine Vessels have been lately taken in by the said Pyrates" that currently infested that area of the West African coast.[71]

By 1740 and the War of Jenkins Ear between Spain and England, news of privateer activity began to capture large amounts of the ship news in the colonial papers. News of privateer activity had always been reported in the newspapers beginning with an account of the French taking an American ship and killing the crew in *Publick Occurrences* in 1690. But by 1740, privateers increased their activity along the American coast, largely due to the increased interest in the resources of North America. Privateers differed from pirates in only one respect; their vessels were generally outfitted by nations or merchants of a nation to go out and rob other countries' vessels, the money made on the resale of the booty going to the privateer and sponsor.[72] Ships started to sail in convoys to better avoid harassment and capture, and American colonies and merchants launched privateers as well to raid Spanish and French ships working the waters of North America and the Caribbean.[73] At times, the confrontations between privateers and the ships they attacked led to bloody battles, like the one described in the *Boston Weekly News-Letter* between sailors from New Providence and Spain off Havana:

> I was forward, cutting the Anchor, and no-body on the Deck but myself with 3 great He-dogs of Spaniards. And hearing a great Noise in the Cabbin, I ran aft, and found one of the Spaniards there killing Mr. Bow. . . . I came to the Lieutenant's Assistance with a fine Broad-Ax, and made several Strokes at the Spaniard to no Purpose; but by good Luck, the Dog looking about, at last I was up with him, for I cut off his Chin, and all lower Jaw; yet he, knowing what they said when we crav'd quarter, never flinch'd at all; Then one of his Legs slipping out on the Blood, I got another fair Stroke at him, and cut his right Foot off. Then the Dog cry'd out for Quarter, which was granted for a few Hours, that he might make his Peace with God, and then we shot him through the body.[74]

Newspaper accounts of the activities of pirates and the bloody revenge inflicted upon privateers may have helped to diminish their numbers, but these news reports did not eradicate them. Pirates and privateers continued to operate in the Atlantic throughout the colonial period, and newspapers related their activity. In 1745, a report of a ship turning pirate proved to be false,[75] but a 1765 news item related how the *Nancy* had turned to piracy. The captain and loyal members of the crew were set adrift, fortunately surviving for six weeks at sea.[76] Another captain was not so fortunate. The mutinying crew tossed the captain and mate overboard and proceeded to Cuba to plunder ships and towns.[77]

Trials and executions of pirates by governments, the second type of pirate news, were common in colonial newspapers, and the concerted effort by the colonies to try and execute pirates, as newspapers reported, may well have played a role in the reduction of piracy, along with America's growing European trade. Two dozen pirates, for example, were condemned to death in the Caribbean in 1730. The *New-England Weekly Journal* reported:

> Twelve of them, who were all Frenchmen, were Executed in one Day, their hands were first cut off at the place of Execution, and then nine of them were

> wrack'd to Death, and Three of them Hang'd; the next Day the other Twelve, who were all Switz's, were Executed, and these likewise having their hands cut off at the place of Execution, were some wrack'd, some saw'd asunder, and the rest hang'd.[78]

At other times, the description of the trial and execution of the pirates was minimized. Pirates were taken, executed, and hung in chains in Virginia, but the fact that the colony collected £2,000 sterling in silver and gold for the capture—the colony kept the booty that the pirates had taken from a ship off Brazil—may have been more important to the welfare of the Virginia than the eradication of some high seas criminals.[79]

Because pirates often forced sailors to either take up the life of piracy or die, it was important for the names of as many pirates as possible to appear in the newspapers whenever Americans were suspected of piracy. News articles often implicated or exonerated individuals. One Simon Vanvorst of New York was implicated along with several European pirates in one article.[80] The *Pennsylvania Gazette* exonerated several officers accused of turning pirate in St. Kitts, saying an earlier report "proves a Mistake."[81] When pirate ships proved to be especially troublesome to shipping, the name of the captured ship and its buccaneer captain were printed to allow shippers to know of their removal from the shipping lanes.[82]

Pirates' treatment of those on a boarded vessel evoked all the horrors of sea travel. Indian, Negro, and Spanish pirates overtook a ship out of Boston in late 1729. They used the flints of their guns as thumbscrews[83] on many members of the crew. All of the crew and passengers were then striped naked, the captain and two others thrown overboard. The rest were whipped with the flat side of cutlasses and set adrift.[84]

The most gruesome of all descriptions of the treatment of sailors by pirates in the newspapers occurred at the end of the colonial period. Ships sailing around North Africa in both the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea were under constant threat from Barbary Coast pirates who then sold crews into slavery in Algiers. A Rhode Island sailor, John Owens, miraculously escaped and brought back a description of the crew's torture:

> Two men belonging to Newport, Rhode-Island . . . were sentenced to have their tongues cut out, which was done by first suspending them by the hair of their heads, then seizing their tongues by pincers, drawing them out, and with a hooked knife cutting them off near the root. Capt. Glitz was condemned to die by an instrument called the maid. . . . A wooden figure curiously dressed, like a woman, was introduced and approached him, seemingly as if going to kiss him, immediately pressed in her arms till the blood gushed out of his mouth, nose, ears, &c. &c. . . . I was hung up by a hook thrust through the fleshy part of my right arm, above the elbow, and a spike driven through the thick part of the thumb. Thus I expected to hang in torture, till death should relieve me, but after hanging 37 minutes, the flesh and ligaments in my arm gave way. . . . I was then seized and fastened to a machine called a rack, where I underwent excruciating tortures, had my collar bone and all my ribs broken except two. After this, I was cruelly dismembered and then delivered into the hands of the surgeons.[85]

The prospects of completing sea travel without falling victim to pirates and all the other dangers possible on the ocean must have played upon the minds of many who either made a living on the sea or traveled on it out of necessity. Perhaps worse even than the horrors inflicted upon sea travelers by pirates were the revulsions that accompanied staying alive when lost or adrift at sea or when a crew mutinied. Colonial newspapers were quite graphic in their descriptions of how these people remained alive.

The ships that sailed the Atlantic could carry only a certain amount of provisions for the crew, and if a boat somehow blew off course or miscalculated, the results were often deadly. Crews were forced to eat whatever they could find, often turning to cannibalism.[86]

Survivors on one cruise were able to live by "God's good providence." It seems that "two Boobies [sea birds] . . . alighted down between them, whose blood they suck'd and flesh they eat." The blood and bird flesh kept them alive until rescue.[87] On another ship blown off course by a strong gale, the crew was reduced to drinking "their own Urine" before casting lots to see which member of the crew would be slaughtered first for food.[88]

Cannibalism seemed to be the option to which many of those shipwrecked and adrift resorted. A rescued ship captain died ten hours after being brought in. "It was a very melancholy prospect, to see him," the newspaper report said, "and to find five of the peoples fingers in his pocket as a store." On the same ship were found, nailed to the ship's mast, were five skeletons of crew members who served as food.[89]

Cannibalism was the survival method of last resort, and crews often agreed to choose one crew member to die to serve as food the rest of the crew. Newspaper accounts could be very explicit when describing these events:

> It was agreed, that one should die to support the rest; and accordingly they cast lots. The first fell upon Patrick Lidane, the only son of a poor widow in this town; who requested that, for their immediate subsistence, they would dispense with the calves of his legs and that perhaps before they should be necessitated to have further recourse to him, Providence might do more for them than they expected. His request was granted, and after cutting away the flesh of his legs, which they eat raw, and whereof he begged a morsel himself, but was refused, he was permitted to live 30 hours. . . . On these . . . without any kind of drink, but what rain water they could catch in the skulls of the killed, did the rest subsist.[90]

Not all newspaper descriptions of shipwrecks were so gruesome. Sometimes they played upon emotions, as the story of a mother and infant trapped in the cabin of an overturned ship did. Those who had escaped the vessel when a squall overset it tried furiously to cut a hole in the hull of the ship with an axe. The woman inside was, "held all the while by a small hook, and was up to the chin in the water." She remained this way with her infant for three and one half hours, with the child drowning only moments before rescue.[91] Later, in a first-person account, the woman, a Mrs. Temple, recounted what happened for the *New-York Evening-Post*:

> The Vessel overset about eleven o'Clock on Tuesday, I was in the Cabbin with the Door shut, one of the Men on board attempted to open the Door when a Sea or Wave coming shut it too again: The Vessel then sunk so low that the Door was under Water and the Cabbin almost full of Water, I sustained myself by my Hand so as to keep me out of the Water, but from the first, the Water was to my Breast, sometimes to my Chin, and sometimes quite overwhelmed me, while I held by a Hook to keep from sinking, I kept my Senses 'till almost the last, but have no Remembrance of my being taken out which was about half after One, when I had just lost my Hold and was sinking, and my Child had expired in my Arms.[92]

One final hazard of ship travel was possible. Passengers could face a crew or crewman out for personal gain. A woman on board a man of war bound for London was the victim of one such cabin boy, who

> stuffed her mouth full of oakem and chips, gave her several blows, then left her weltering in her gore, and went to the gunner her husband, knocked him down with a carpenter's mallet, and gave him so many blows, that he left him for dead; then broke open his chest took his watch, money, several shirts and shifts, and other wearing apparel . . . then went to his wife, took her gold rings and ear rings; one being hard to come out, he cut it out of her ear, and left them both in that deplorable condition.[93]

Conclusion

Ships and colonial newspapers formed the most basic of informational relationships. Ships provided newspapers with the majority of their news items. In addition, ships and their cargoes were important news in colonial America, and the newspapers continually published information about the arrival and departure of vessels, their cargo, sailing conditions and any bit of intelligence that could be perceived to be valuable to ships, the merchants that filled them and the citizens of the port.

While thousands of articles appeared in colonial papers concerning ships, most of them contained only basic and mundane news. Even though this news was not exciting, its value would be difficult to measure, given the tremendous amount of intercontinental and intercolonial trade that transpired from the ports of eighteenth-century colonial America.

Shipping and news flow increased simultaneously in eighteenth-century America. Colonists had looked to Europe for politial and economic direction during this period, but increasingly, the colonies discovered a way to attain independence through a growing European trade that provided the colonies with much-needed revenue and through intercolonial trade that helped colonists in each region attain the goods needed to live. This fostered political independence as well. By 1775, it was England that needed American goods imported not vice versa, as a report from Bristol, England, in the *Essex Journal* proves. During a one-year period, from August 1773 to August 1774, England imported 102,388 bushels of wheat, 31,682 bushels of Indian corn, 22,646 bushels of barley, 15,432 bushels of oats, 14,720 barrels of flour, and 2,000 bushels of beans through the port of Bristol alone.[94]

Even though shipping news as it related to the economic welfare of America dominated the news of the sea, the penchant for graphic, sensational news was not omitted from colonial newspapers. Numerous reports concerning pirates and shipwrecks illustrated the dangers of sea travel in gruesome, bloody detail. Although this type of sea news was much more entertaining than the more ordinary types of news from the sea, its informational value was not completely lost in the shock value that these stories possessed. These graphic accounts disclosed the location of pirates and privateers and gave the names of survivors rescued from ships assumed lost. Despite these facts, the bloody episodes of ship news describing cannibalism and murderous pirates probably enhanced the fear of sea travel more than anything else.

Improvements in ships were not made during the period, so the time that it took for news to reach American ports from either England or from another American colony remained relatively constant. What changed was the amount of shipping. The great increase in trade expanded the base of news received by printers, who in turn were afforded greater options in the news they chose to disseminate to their readers. Many news stories appear in only one or two newspapers because printers in other regions opted to print different news that was of more interest to the people of that area even though the same news printed by other newspapers was available to them.[95] Even though the amount of news received in ports increased because of expanded trade and printers could exercise greater selection of news that they placed in their newspapers, it should be pointed out that printers continued to print news on very similar topics throughout the colonies during the colonial period and continued to copy from each other's newspapers. This meant that colonial newspapers continued to be very similar in appearance and news content.

Ships, then, provided the bulk of the news that colonial newspapers printed, and news on and about the sea remained a primary type of news during the colonial period. Only when war became the focus of American news in 1775 did ship news lose some of its prominence in newspapers. The news of the sea that appeared in colonial newspapers also tells the story of piracy in the eighteenth century. Pirates plagued the coastal waters of North America and the Caribbean during the first three decades of the century, but news of pirate activity in these waters almost entirely disappeared from newspapers after 1730. The news of the sea in newspapers, however, made it very evident that piracy merely changed its political stripes around this time because of the rise in privateering, and from 1735-1760, privateers sailing under French and Spanish colors continually interrupted American trade and captured ships sailing under the British flag. According to colonial newspaper reports, the successful campaigns against France and Spain in both America and in Europe evidently put an end to most of the privateering activities in American and Caribbean waters after 1765 because newspaper news of privateering—although it did not disappear completely—decreased significantly in the last decade of the colonial period.

Trade, treachery, piracy, and daily necessities—the sea and newspapers found themselves intwined during the colonial period with information on these and other topics. British colonial America would not have thrived or perhaps even existed without the ocean, and newspapers would not have become the essential informational tools of the people without the news the sea brought and created.

ENDNOTES

1. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 22 January 1744-5, 1.

2. *Boston News-Letter*, 26 December 1720, 2.

3. Ibid., 14 January 1705-06, 2.

4. It should be noted that colonial newspapers printed prior to 1770 were located in towns on major waterways. All had connections to the Atlantic Ocean. Hartford, Connecticut, which was approximately forty miles up the Connecticut River, was the farthest inland of any colonial town to have a newspaper until the beginning of a newspaper in Albany, New York, in 1772. Albany, located north of New York on the Hudson River, was still easily accessible by ship. Waterways were essential to the success of colonial towns both economically and in providing a means to receive news. In turn, the ability to receive news as quickly as possible ensured the success of towns.

5. John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 71.

6. During the colonial period, printers published approximately 36,000 weekly, biweekly and triweekly editions of newspapers. Because of the large number of newspapers in existence, a method was devised for this study that would provide comprehensive coverage of all colonial newspapers while holding the number of editions that needed to be read to a manageable number. All extant editions prior to 1720 were read, and from 1720-1775, newspapers were read in five-year increments—1720, 1725, and so on. Every extant and available newspaper edition printed in the study years from 1720-1755 was read. From 1760-1775, the large number of newspapers and total editions printed during each of the study years necessitated using a method of sampling. A method of selecting newspapers for these years was devised that ensured a low margin of error, less than 4 percent, meaning that less than four chances in one hundred existed for missing a news item dealing with the sea. More than two thousand newspapers were read for the years 1760-1775 or between 500-600 for each year of the study. Even though sampling occurred in selecting years for this study and newspapers to be read from 1760-1775, sampling was not involved in the reading of the newspapers. Sampling figures based on Donald P. Warwick and Charles A. Lininger, *The Sample Survey: Theory and Practice* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), 93.

7. Sidney Kobre, *The Development of the Colonial Newspaper* (1944; reprint, Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1960), 20, pointed out the fact that the *Boston News-Letter* routinely ran ship news of this type. Kobre's study of colonial newspapers, however, is the only media history to deal with the news of the sea and colonial newspapers. Kobre's conclusions on news of the sea do not explore the vast amount of sea news that appeared in colonial newspapers nor do they examine the various facets of that news.

8. William A. Dill, *The Growth of Newspapers in the United States* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1928), 11.

9. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 642.

10. Gary M. Walton and James F. Shepherd, *The Economic Rise of Early America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 38.

11. Albert Anthony Giesecke, *American Commercial Legislation Before 1789* (1910; reprint, New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 4.

12. Victor L. Johnson, "Fair Traders and Smugglers in Philadelphia 1754-1763," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 83 (1959): 126-27.

13. Oscar Theodore Barck and Hugh Talmage Lefler, *Colonial America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), 364.

14. Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 5.

15. McCusker and Menard, *The Economy of British America 1607-1789*, 79.

16. David A. Smith, "Dependent Urbanization in Colonial America: The Case of Charleston, South Carolina," *Social Forces* 66 (September 1987): 10-11.

17. See Jacob M. Price, "The Transatlantic Economy," in *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era*, Jack P. Greene and J. R. Pole, eds. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984): 18-42.

18. Ian K. Steele, *The English Atlantic 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 159.

19. Ibid., 40, 275.

20. Ibid., 275.

21. James F. Shepherd and Gary M. Walton, *Shipping, Maritime Trade, and the Economic Development of Colonial North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 49.

22. Frank Luther Mott, "The Newspaper Coverage of Lexington and Concord," in *Highlights in the History of the American Press* , Edwin H. Ford and Edwin Emery, eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954). Mott computes the amount of time it took for the news of the opening shots of the American Revolution to reach each of the major ports with

newspapers in America.

23. Ibid.

24. *Boston News-Letter*, 14 January 1705-06, 2, provided notice of Belcher's wedding.

25. Examples of different types of ship news used are representative of news items that appeared in all of the colonial newspapers.

26. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 5 March 1729-30, 1.

27. *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 16 November 1730, 2.

28. Ibid., 24 March 1735, 2; 5 May 1735, 2.

29. *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 23 November 1770, 3.

30. *Boston Gazette*, 4 January 1719-20, 2.

31. See, for example, *Boston Gazette*, 14 March 1719-20; 25 April 1720 and 9 May 1720. When giving the price current for Rhode Island ports, the *Gazette* listed the colony as a collective, not by the name of a particular town.

32. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 4 January 1734-5, 2.

33. Ibid., 19 April 1770, 4, is but one example.

34. See, for example, *New-York Journal; or the General Advertiser* (Holt's), 19 July 1770.

35. *Boston News-Letter*, 17 October 1720, 2.

36. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 6 September 1775, 2.

37. *Connecticut Gazette* (New-Haven), 19 April 1755, 4.

38. *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick* (Boston), 25 September 1690.

39. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 19 June 1760, 3.

40. This type of ship news appeared with great frequency and in numerous editions of colonial newspapers. The *New-York Mercury*, 11 March 1765, 2, advised New Yorkers that the anticipated fleet from London had been detained, therefore it should not be expected as soon as had been anticipated. The *North-Carolina Gazette* (Wilmington), 20 November 1765, 6, provided news on ships sailing from Philadelphia and Antigua. During the French and Indian War, ships provided weekly information on the shipping situation from Nova Scotia to the New England colonies.

41. *New-York Evening-Post*, 4 February 1744-5, 2-3.

42. *New-London Summary; or the Weekly Advertiser*, 31 October 1760, 3, advised its readers that a ship safely landed in Philadelphia after fighting through a storm at Hatteras. Ship reports from New York and Jamaica, however, noted that the vessels were lost and overset respectively.

43. *Connecticut Journal, and New-Haven Post-Boy*, 19 January 1770, 3.

44. *Boston News-Letter*, 12 June 1704, 1.

45. *Boston Gazette*, 1 August 1720, 3.

46. A description of the types of ships used during the colonial period may be found in Charles Gray, *Pirates of the Eastern Seas (1618-1723)*, ed. George MacMunn (Port Washington, N.Y. and London: Kennikat Press, 1933), ix.

47. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 24 April 1755, 2.

48. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 4 April 1740, 2.

49. *Boston Evening-Post*, 2 June 1755, 4.

50. *Virginia Gazette*, (Williamsburg, Dixon and Purdie), 22 February 1770, 2.

51. *Boston Evening-Post*, 13 October 1755, 2.

52. *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 19 August 1735, 2.

53. Daniel Vickers, "Nantucket Whalemen in the Deep-Sea Fishery: The Changing Anatomy of an Early American Labor Force," *Journal of American History* 72 (September 1985): 281.

54. *Boston News-Letter*, 30 May 1720, 2.

55. Lesley Dow, *Whales* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 49.

56. Ibid.

57. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 27 March 1735, 3.

58. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 10 January 1760, 2.

59. *Boston Evening-Post*, 21 January 1740, 1.

60. *Boston Gazette, or Country Journal*, 10 March 1760, 1.

61. *New-York Weekly Journal*, 21 April 1740, 1; and *Boston Weekly Post-Boy*, 12 May 1740, 2.

62. *Boston Evening-Post*, 4 June 1750, 2.

63. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 30 October 1755, 1.

64. *Boston News-Letter*, 26 December 1720, 2.

65. Frank Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels: The Golden Age of Piracy* (New York: Hearst Marine Books, 1986), 20.

66. Ibid.; John Esquemeling, *The Buccaneers of America* (1684; reprint, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1951), xv. The introduction of this work, for which no author is given, is the source of the information used here, not Esquemeling who died in 1707.

67. Steele, *The English Atlantic*, 225.

68. John Esquemeling, *The Buccaneers of America* first appeared in English in 1684. First printed in Dutch in 1678, the book appeared in numerous other editions with information added to that provided by Esquemeling. Esquemeling is described as "one of the Buccaneers who was present at these tragedies." The second edition of *The General History of the Pyrates* was offered for sale in 1725 in Philadelphia by Andrew Bradford in the *American Weekly Mercury*, 12 January 1724-25, 4.

69. Esquemeling, *The Buccaneers of America*, 229.

70. *Boston News-Letter*, 29 July 1725, 2.

71. *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 17 March 1719-20, 3.

72. Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 58-9.

73. Numerous examples of news of privateers exist throughout the newspapers of the colonial period. Privateering activity peaked during the French and Indian War years.

74. *Boston Weekly News-Letter*, 18 July 1745, 4.

75. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 9 May 1745, 3.

76. *Newport Mercury, or the Weekly Advertiser*, 25 March 1765, 2.

77. *New-York Journal; or the General Advertiser*, 19 July 1770, 2.

78. *New-England Weekly Journal* (Boston), 8 June 1730, 2.

79. *Boston News-Letter*, 17 March 1720, 2.

80. Ibid., 28 October 1717, 2.

81. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 9 May 1745, 3.

82. *Massachusetts Gazette*, 8 March 1770, 2.

83. Thumbscrews were devices used to rip fingers from their sockets. Sherry, *Raiders and Rebels*, 48.

84. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 20 January 1729-30, 3.

85. *Boston Evening-Post*, 23 January 1775, 2; *South-Carolina and American General Gazette* (Charleston), 3 March 1775, 2.

86. The *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia), 16 February 1719-20, 2, told of a Portuguese ship that missed its port and wandered the ocean for forty days. Only two of the crew survived, six others were used for food.

87. *Boston News-Letter*, 22 August 1715, 2.

88. *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), 21 March 1744-45, 4.

89. *Pennsylvania Journal, or Weekly Advertiser* (Philadelphia), 13 March 1760, 2; and *Boston Evening-Post*, 17 March 1760, 4.

90. *Boston Evening-Post*, 23 June 1760, 2.

91. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 21 November 1750, 3.

92. *New-York Evening-Post*, 5 November 1750, 3.

93. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 7 March 1750, 2.

94. *Essex Journal and Merrimack Packet: Or, the Massachusetts and New-Hampshire General Advertiser* (Newbury-Port), 4 January 1775, 2.

95. Newspapers were carried from one port to another in colonial America. Because they were, the news that was generated in Boston or received from a ship arriving at the Massachusetts port that appeared in a Boston newspaper eventually found its way to New York, Philadelphia, Annapolis, Williamsburg, Charleston, Savannah, and every other port between where ships from Boston docked. News that appeared in colonial newspapers became the "official" notice of events, and the sharing of newspapers was the manner in which these official reports were shared with other regions of the colonies.

C5

The Press and the War of 1812

by

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Submitted to the 1995 paper competition of the American Journalism Historians Association

Abstract

The Press and the War of 1812

Susan Thompson
The University of Alabama

When a radical Federalist newspaper in Baltimore printed antiwar sentiments after the War of 1812 had been declared, an angry mob destroyed the press and razed the building, then searched for the editors to kill them. Thus began the War of 1812 in the theater of the party press. While newspaper editors enjoyed more freedom from governmental restraint than they had in previous administrations, owing to James Madison's strong belief in a free press, radical Federalist editors who opposed the war received threats and sometimes had to face violent mobs who questioned the editors' patriotism. Anti-press violence was a major characteristic of the period, but it was not the only one. For the most part, leading editors were also community leaders, or political leaders, and sometimes they exhibited independent views that were contrary to party platforms. Except for some instances of news suppression, Republican and Federalist papers, even radical Federalist prints, provided more than adequate coverage of the War of 1812. Editorially, radical and New England Federalist prints blamed defeats on the Madison administration and continued opposing the war for its duration, and Republicans defended the administration and the war. Word of great victories and news of peace brought similar expressions of joy from Republican and Federalist prints alike.

Submitted to the 1995 paper competition of the American Journalism Historians Association

The Press and the War of 1812

Susan Thompson
The University of Alabama

In June of 1812, as the United States Congress in Washington City prepared to declare war against Great Britain, the coffee houses in Baltimore buzzed with talk about Alexander Hanson, a 26-year-old radical Federalist editor, and his partner Jacob Wagner. The talk came from men who were American laborers and immigrants from European countries such as Germany, France, and Ireland, all of whom hated Great Britain, the Federalist party in America, the Baltimore *Federal Republican*, and its editors. Since Hanson had commenced publishing at the age of 22, his pro-British, anti-war, radical Federalist views had brought threats of tar and feathers from the local Republican citizenry, as well as duel challenges, and even a court-martial from the militia which had failed on a technicality. The men in the coffee houses were fed up with the *Federal Republican*, and their consensus was this: if the rapscallion editors continued their familiar diatribe after war was declared, it would be the patriotic duty of Republicans in Baltimore to stop them.[1]

War was declared on June 18, and the June 20 issue of the *Federal Republican* inflamed the Republicans as expected. "We mean to use every constitutional argument and every legal means to render as odious and suspicious . . . the patrons and contrivers of this highly impolitic and destructive war," the editorial had said. It had declared that editorial opposition would continue for the duration of the war, and it had expressed a belief commonly held by Federalists, that President James Madison and the Republicans, in their actions against Great Britain, had aligned themselves with the feared conqueror Napoleon Bonaparte.[2] On June 22, a mob destroyed the *Federal Republican* presses and supplies before they razed the building. When a rioter fell to his death from an upstairs window, the frenzied mob searched for the editors to kill them.[3]

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[1] Deposition of Isaac Caustin, in *Report of the Committee of Grievances and Courts of Justice in the House of Delegates of Maryland, on the Subject of the Recent Mobs and Riots in the City of Baltimore* (Annapolis, 1813), 318. (Hereafter referred to as *Maryland House of Delegates Report*). Deposition of James P. Heath, ibid., 284. Cited in Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812, A Forgotten Conflict*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 57.

Thus began the War of 1812 in the theater of the party press. While newspaper editors enjoyed more freedom from governmental restraint than they had in previous administrations, owing to James Madison's strong belief in a free press, radical Federalist editors who opposed the war received threats and sometimes had to face violent mobs who questioned the editors' patriotism. Anti-press violence in response to war opposition was a major characteristic of the period, but it was not the only one. For the most part, leading editors were also community leaders, or political leaders, and sometimes they expressed independent views that were contrary to party platforms; for example, many Federalist editors stopped or at least toned down their criticisms after war had been declared. Except for some instances of news suppression, Republican and Federalist papers, even radical Federalist prints, provided more than adequate coverage of the War of 1812. Word of great victories and news of peace brought similar expressions of joy from Republican and Federalist prints alike.

The War of 1812 has been described by some historians as "obscure,"[4] and perhaps for this reason, media historians have tended to avoid the subject. Some scholars have examined the nature of the party press during America's first party system, and others have examined newspaper content prior to the War of 1812, but an overall study of the press and the war has not seen publication.[5] A body of work exists on the war itself, and much of it mentions the press in some manner; some have relied heavily upon newspaper accounts, for example, but their overall focus has been the war, not the press.[6] Through the years, several articles have been published on the Baltimore riots, but other instances anti-press violence have received only brief mention in books and unrelated articles.[7] A few media historians have included a discussion of the war years in their overall studies of particular newspapers or editors.[8]

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[2] Baltimore *Federal Republican*, 20 June 1812.
[3] *The Weekly Register*, Hezekiah Niles, ed., Vol. 2, 8 August 1812, 375-380; A.C. Hanson, et al., "An Exact and Authentic Narrative of the Events Which Took Place in Baltimore on the 27th and 28th of July Last," pamphlet printed in *Federal Republican*, 14 August 1812 (also printed in various newspapers); *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire Into the Causes and Extent of the Late Commotions in Baltimore, To Edward Johnson, Esq., Mayor of the City of Baltimore*, Baltimore City Council Report printed in *Federal Republican*, 12 August 1812 (also printed in various newspapers). For historical accounts of the episode, see Donald R. Hickey, "The Darker Side of Democracy: The Baltimore Riots of 1812," *Maryland Historian* 7 (1976): 1-19; Frank Cassell, "The Great Baltimore Riot of 1812," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 70 (1975): 241-59; Paul A. Gilje, "The Baltimore Riots of 1812 and the Breakdown of the Anglo-American Mob Tradition," *Journal of Social History* 13 (1980): 547-64; and John Nerone, *Violence Against The Press, Policing the Public Sphere in U.S. History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 67-71.
[4] Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 1.

Several ironic events characterize the War of 1812 period. Parliament repealed the hated Orders in Council (which prevented American trade to French colonies, and allowed seizure of American vessels and confiscation of their cargo) two days before the United States declared war, and the news of each crossed the Atlantic at the same time. Then, on the sea, the situation proved to be David against Goliath, with America's rag-tag navy repeatedly whipping superior vessels of the British leviathan; on land, where America was supposed to be strong, inglorious defeats embarrassed the nation. Also, Andrew Jackson's stunning victory in New Orleans occurred after the peace treaty had been signed, before the news of peace could reach him. According to the terms of the peace treaty, the United States gained nothing from the war, yet Andrew Jackson's victory gave Americans the feeling that the war had been won.

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[5] Media historian Donald R. Avery has published several papers on newspaper content in the years prior to the War of 1812. "American Over European Community? Newspaper Content Changes, 1808-1812," *Journalism Quarterly* 63 (1986): 311-14; "The Emerging American Newspaper: Discovering the Home Front," *American Journalism* 1, 2 (1984): 51-66; and "The Evolution of the American Newspaper in the Pre-War of 1812 Period: A Shift from Foreign to Domestic News Content," *Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication* 1 (1982): 35-43. These articles show that American newspapers had begun printing more domestic news than foreign news in the years prior to 1812. Media historian William David Sloan has described the party press in several articles, including "The Early Party Press: The Newspaper Role in American Politics, 1788-1812," *Journalism History* 9 (1982): 18-24; "The Federalist-Republican Press: Newspaper Functions in America's First Party System, 1789-1816," *Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication* 1 (Spring 1982): 13-22; and "Scurrility and the Party Press, 1789-1816," *American Journalism* 5 (1988): 97-112.

[6] Henry Adams, *History of the United States*, Vol. VIII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921). Hickey, *The War of 1812*.

[7] Nerone's *Violence Against the Press* offers a discussion of the Baltimore riots, and mentions two other instances of violence, but the work does not focus specifically on the War of 1812.

[8] Samuel E. Forman, *The Political Activities of Philip Freneau* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1902) 80-96. Kim Tousley Phillips, *William Duane, Radical Journalist in the Age of Jefferson* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 315-407. William E. Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1972).

A brief background sketch is necessary to facilitate understanding of the party press and the reactions of its editors to the war events. France and England, the two greatest powers in the world, had resumed their war during the first decade of the 19th century when Napoleon took power. The pro-British Federalist party and the pro-French Republican party had emerged in the United States, representing, in essence, the interests of the commercial North and the agrarian South, respectively. The Federalist party was led by George Washington's Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, until his untimely death following a pistol duel in 1804, while the Republicans enjoyed the leadership of Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Party leaders and members contributed financial and editorial support to newspapers throughout the nation to disseminate their views among the populace and thus vie for electoral power. Political differences led the Republicans to accuse the Federalists of having monarchical tendencies, while the Federalists defamed the Republicans as supporters of the horrors of the French revolution and, later, as instruments of the feared Napoleon.

Several factors have been identified as causes of the War of 1812, but the importance of each in relation to the others has proven difficult to weigh. British impressment of thousands of American seamen was one of the major causes, as was Britain's refusal to repeal its Orders in Council, which allowed the seizure of American trading vessels and confiscation of their cargoes. Great Britain had pointed to a law among nations, the Rule of 1756, which held that nations could not engage in trade during times of war that were forbidden during times of peace. France, unable to trade with her colonies because of war with Britain, had engaged American ships to do her trading for her. Britain had then blockaded French ports and declared by Order of Council that trade ships had to enter a British port and pay duties on their cargoes. Napoleon had countered by announcing that trade ships entering British ports and paying duties would be viewed as British property and fair game for the French. In essence, each country had claimed the right to seize American ships and confiscate their goods. Also, on the western frontier, the United States army officers discovered British weapons in Indian camps, confirming a suspicion western settlers had held for years, that the British were behind the Indian uprisings.[9]

On June 22, 1807, the British *Leopard* fired on the unprepared U.S. *Chesapeake*, killing three and wounding eighteen Americans, all for the sake of recovering four deserters, three of whom claimed to have deserted because they were actually Americans escaping their impressment.[10] It was one of those rare instances when Federalist and Republican newspapers joined together in expressing the outrage of a nation's people. Even the *Connecticut Courant*, a newspaper in the den of New England Federalism, headlined the incident with words like "Disgraceful Outrage" and said editorially, "We have never, on any occasion, witnessed the spirit of the people excited to such a great degree of indignation, or such a thirst for revenge, as on hearing of the late unexampled outrage on the *Chesapeake*."[11]

Rather than declaring war, Jefferson responded with an embargo designed to shut down U.S. foreign trade, both imports and exports. It was finally repealed as he prepared to leave office in 1809. It was never completely effective, because as the economy had worsened many merchants had résorted to smuggling. New Englanders, in particular, hated the embargo. It had even inspired Federalist newspapers there to speak of secession. "It is better to suffer the amputation of a limb than to lose the whole body. We must prepare for the amputation," said the Boston *Gazette*.[12] Some Republicans were also upset, feeling that Jefferson should have declared war against Great Britain instead. When Madison assumed office, the repeal of the embargo went into effect, making trade lawful with all countries except Great Britain and France; and New Englanders, at least, were appeased somewhat.

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[9] Reginald Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812*, (New York: A.S. Barnes & Company, Inc., 1962).
[10] Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 17.
[11] Hartford *Connecticut Courant*, 3 July and 15 July 1807.

Two important events in 1811 led to war, one on sea involving the British, the other on land with the Indians. In May, a skirmish between the U.S. *President* and the British sloop *Little Belt* resulted in severe damage to the British vessel.[13] Throughout the country, except in New England, Americans cheered the action as revenge for the *Chesapeake* affair. The other incident was the discovery of British weapons in Indian camps.[14] The public outrage was so strong that President Madison announced his support for the war in the presidential campaign of 1811, and won reelection. Congress convened on November 4, and the following day Madison, in his annual address, condemned Britain's Orders in Council and called upon Congress to "feel the duty of putting the United States into an armor and an attitude demanded by the crisis, and corresponding with the national spirit and expectations."[15] War was delayed many months as Congress debated the details of war financing.

When war was finally declared on June 18, 1812, some of the Federalist prints announced their intentions to continue opposition for the duration of the war, and President James Madison did nothing to stop them. The president's silence and restraint had to do with his basic beliefs in an unrestricted press. "By subjecting the truth of opinion to regulation, fine, and imprisonment, to be inflicted by those who are of a different opinion," he once wrote, "the free range of the human mind is injuriously restrained."[16] During John Adams' administration, when the Alien and Sedition laws were used to jail opposition editors, Madison and his friend Jefferson had authored the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions, essentially nullifying the national laws in those states. While president, Jefferson repealed the national sedition law, but used state common laws to prosecute libels against him and the government. Madison did not take any legal actions against the Federalist prints, even though he received much personal abuse in their columns. He remained relatively quiet on the subject of the press calumnies in print in both public and private writings throughout his presidency.

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[12] Boston *Gazette*, reprinted in Newburyport *Statesman*, 13 October 1808.
[13] Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 24.
[14] Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812*, 222-225.
[15] James Madison, Third Annual Message of the President to Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, 5 November 1811, in James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902*, (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Literature and Art, 1905), 494.

Lack of governmental restraint and anti-press mob violence were perhaps the most significant characteristics of the press during the period immediately prior to and during the war. Since the 1780s, the marriage of political parties to newspapers in America had resulted in fierce editorials, some nasty name-calling, anger, and sometimes even violence against editors. But when the second war against Great Britain began, the editorial bickering, the vituperation, the accusations, the shouts of sedition, the anti-press violence, and the threats of violence, reached a feverish climax unrivaled in the early years of the republic. The normal anger was exacerbated by the opposition of one party to a national war--the kind of opposition that has caused similar hostile feelings toward antiwar groups in the years since 1812. When the war ended in 1815, one party triumphed and the other lay wounded so badly that it never recovered.

The most publicized, and most bloody, incident of violence was the second mob attack on the *Federal Republican* in Baltimore. After the destruction of the *Federal Republican* office, Jacob Wagner, the co-editor, moved his family from their house on

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[16] James Madison, "Freedom of Opinion," Address to the General Assembly of Virginia, 23 January 1799, in *The Complete Madison, His Basic Writings*, Saul K. Padover, ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1953), 296.

South Charles Street to a nearby city and kept quiet, but the impetuous, radical Hanson, who had been out of town during the attack, began making plans to revive his newspaper. From his home in nearby Rockville, he enlisted the financial, moral, and advisory support of several Federalist leaders, including two Revolutionary War generals who could offer defense knowledge and strategies. One letter to Hanson concerning armaments, unsigned but believed to have been authored by General Henry "Light-Horse Harry" Lee (the father of future Civil War Gen. Robert E. Lee), concluded, ". . . you having began defence, must never even think of concession--Die or conquer." The plan was not without opposition from other Federalists. In another letter to Hanson, the writer insisted that the plan seemed "too much like a plan to provoke an attack," and the author of the letter declined to participate.[17]

Wagner searched for a suitable house in Baltimore from which his partner could publish, and when no other could be secured, he leased Hanson his own brick home located near the city's busy harbor district. Hanson and his Federalist compatriots stocked the house with ammunition and found men to serve as sentries. Unable to obtain a printing press that could be transported to the South Charles Street house, the newspaper was printed in Georgetown and copies were transported to Baltimore for distribution. Hanson demonstrated his do-or-die stubbornness in his bold display of the Baltimore address, "No. 45 South Charles Street," in the masthead. He would show the Baltimore mobsters that they could not stop the *Federal Republican*, and if they tried this time, he would be ready. Hanson moved into the Charles Street house on Saturday, July 25, and many Baltimore Federalists came by to welcome him home. Some stayed to help defend the house from an expected mob attack. General Lee took charge of the defensive measures.[18]

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[17] *The Weekly Register*, Vol. 2, 8 August 1812, 375-80.
[18] Deposition of John Howard Payne, in *Maryland House of Delegates Report*, cited in Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812, A Forgotten Conflict* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 60; also, John Lynn to Hanson, 19 July 1812, and Lee (reportedly) to Hanson, 20 July 1812, *The Weekly Register*, Vol. 2, 8 August 1812, 376 and 378.

On July 27 the *Federal Republican* reappeared in Baltimore. Once copies were distributed, Hanson and his armed men waited inside the house for the city's reaction. The paper contained, of course, an editorial meant to inflame the Republican citizenry, denouncing the previous mob attack and accusing the mob of acting out the wishes of high-ranking Republicans such as the editors of the *National Intelligencer* and owner of the Baltimore *Whig,* Samuel Harrison Smith. It declared that the June 22 mob attack had been an attempt "to destroy the freedom of speech and of press."[19]

The violence began innocently enough, but it escalated rapidly. On July 27 in the early evening, some boys gathered outside the house and began throwing rocks at it and insults at its defenders. Soon adults joined them, and before long they had shattered all the windows of the house.[20] The armed men inside warned the people outside to disperse, but they would not. At about 10:00 p.m. the Federalists fired a warning shot, and this brought more people to the scene.[21] A man who lived in a nearby house, Thadeus Gales, convinced the crowd that the shot had been aimed at him, and he led a group of irate people up to the house.[22] When they forced their way inside by pushing through the doorway, shots were fired. Gales was killed and several others were wounded. Members of the mob helped the wounded from the house and carried away the body. The word spread throughout the city and the mob continued to increase.[23] At first, local officials refused to involve themselves. Brigadier General John Stricker reportedly said, "I am no disperser of mobs,"[24] but later, when the mob extended from the scene of violence to his house, he finally ordered Major William Barney to intervene with cavalry. Major Barney then waited until 3 a.m., until two city magistrates had signed the orders, before he appeared on the St. Charles Street scene.[25]

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[19] *Federal Republican*, 27 July 1812.

[20] Hanson et al., "Exact and Authentic Narrative." "Report of the Baltimore City Council."

[21] Hanson et al., "Exact and Authentic Narrative."

[22] Deposition of John Howard Payne, in *Maryland House of Delegates Report*, 16, cited in Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812, A Forgotten Conflict*, 61-63.

[23] Hanson et al., "An Exact and Authentic Narrative."

[24] Deposition of Peter L. White, in *Maryland House of Delegates Report*, 71, cited in Hickey, *The War of 1812, A Forgotten Conflict*, 63.

At about 4 a.m., the editor of the Republican Baltimore *Whig*, Thomas Wilson, looking deranged, according to witnesses, helped several others bring a cannon into position in a nearby alley.[26] They pointed it at the house, and Wilson commanded them to fire and screamed, "We must have blood for blood!"[27] Major William Barney intervened, took a seat atop the cannon, and prevented Wilson and his men from firing. Barney then returned to the house and convinced the group of about 24 men inside that they should surrender and be escorted to jail until an investigation could be made into the death of Gales. The Federalists accepted Barney's advice, all except Hanson, who disapproved of putting down their arms and leaving the house. At about 6 a.m., the crowd had swelled to about 1,500 to 2,000 people, and the city officials finally came to the scene. The Federalists were finally taken to jail.[28] Later that day, Wilson published in the *Whig:* "So help me, Heaven, as our sincere opinion is, that since a band of murderous traitors did provoke the people, the people ought to have razed their garrison to the ground and put them, ever [sic] man, to death."[29]

The crowd dispersed during the day, and the prisoners were safe--until night fell and an unruly mob gathered at the jail and then gained entrance inside. The prisoners doused the lights when the mob rushed in, and about half of the Federalists were able to escape in the confusion. The unfortunate ones who were captured were severely beaten and tortured. Feigning death was the safest course, but even then they were stabbed with penknives, and hot wax was dripped into their eyes to detect if they were feigning. Castration was threatened but not performed. General James M.

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[25] Depositions of John Howard Payne, William Gwynn, George H. Steuart, and William Barney, in *Maryland House of Delegates Report*, 16-17, 24-26, 216, 256-62, cited in Hickey, *The War of 1812, A Forgotten Conflict*, 63.
[26] Georgetown *Federal Republican*, 23 October 1812.
[27] Ibid, 31 August 1812.
[28] Hanson, "An Exact and Authentic Narrative."
[29] Baltimore *Whig*, 28 July 1812, reprinted in the *New-York Evening Post*, 31 July 1812.

Lingan repeatedly pleaded for mercy rather than pretending to be dead, and the beating did not stop until he stopped pleading. He was the only Federalist killed, but the wounds inflicted upon the others shortened the lives of several men, including Hanson. Doctors arrived on the scene and convinced the mobsters that medical science needed the bodies. They took the fallen men inside and tended to their injuries, then quietly made arrangements to get them safely out of town.[30]

After the second mob attack in Baltimore, Federalist newspapers insinuated that Madison had provoked everything in order to silence to the Federalist press, and Madison's reaction of customary silence has given rise to historical speculation on the validity of the Federalists' charges. The accusation is grossly unfair to James Madison, who was one of the greatest defenders and protectors of press freedom, at personal expense, to occupy the White House. On the subject of the Baltimore riots, Madison said that he "never considered an assault by the mob . . . as possible," and therefore he had felt that the local authorities could handle the situation.[31]

The atrocities committed in Baltimore were the most horrible and most publicized, but there were other instances of violence against radical Federalist prints throughout the country. It should be pointed out that Federalist radicals were the targets. Editors who expressed their views in moderate or mild tones, who did not fiercely oppose the war, were not disturbed in their printing operations. In Baltimore, for instance, another, milder Federalist newspaper continued printing without incident throughout the riots and the war.

The situation in Georgia clearly illustrates the various factions of Federalist prints. In his study, John E. Talmadge, called Georgia Federalists "a vocal and aggressive minority" but lacking any real political power. Three Federalist editors, Philip Wolhopter of the Savannah *Columbian Museum*, Thomas Hobby of the

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[30] Hanson, "An Exact and Authentic Narrative."
[31] James Madison to J. Montgomery, 13 August 1812, James Madison Papers, Library of Congress.

Augusta *Herald*, and John S. Mitchell of the Savannah *American Patriot*, represent mild, moderate, and radical editors respectively. In the months leading up to the war, Wolhopter reprinted editorials from firebrands like Hanson's *Federal Republican*, but his own editorials were only mildly critical. When war began, he stopped all opposition, printing only letters and official documents from Washington and London. Hobby, called the "vilest Tory in the Town" by a Republican editor, also reprinted articles from the radical Federal prints and supplemented them with harsh words of his own. When he saw that war was inevitable, however, he insisted that his party was loyal to America rather than England, and he announced that he and other Federalists would defend their country in war. When war began he was true to his word. He stopped all opposition and called for citizens to unite against the British. Republican newspapers made fun of his new-found patriotism, but he ignored them. Mitchell, the spitfire Federalist of the group, so inflamed the citizenry that they ran him out of business before the war started. As the situation heated up during spring of 1812, he kept two pistols handy. His attackers burst through the front door of his home on June 5. Mitchell provided the following first-person account:

> I seized the pistols, cocked them, and demanded their business--they equivocated and shuffled upon my telling them to stand off or I would fire--others of their brutal comrades appeared. . . . My attention was for a moment distracted, and I felt a repugnance at shedding the blood of a fellow-creature, until compelled by necessity; my left arm was seized and one pistol wrested from me; I presented the other to the breast of one of the gang, which flashed--I was thus dis-armed and surrounded by several strong-bodied men, who with heavy clubs struck me with such violence over my face and uncovered head that it was my impression at the moment, they intended committing murder.[32]

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[32] John S. Mitchell, Broadside of 6 June 1812, addressed to "The Free and Impartial Citizens of Savannah," quoted in John E. Talmadge, "Georgia's Federalist Press and the War of 1812," *The Journal of Southern History* 19 (1953): 488-500. For Wolhopter, see Savannah *Columbian Museum*, 29 July 1812. For Hobby, see Athens *Georgia Express*, 3 January, 17 April, 26 June, and 17 July 1812, Augusta *Herald*, 2 January, 20 February, 27 February, 2 April, 9 April, and 7 May 1812, and Augusta *Chronicle*, 17 April and 19 June 1812. For Mitchell, see Savannah *American Patriot*, 14, 21, 24, and 28 April 1812, and 2, 8, 12, 14, and 26 May 1812.

The mob then dragged him into the street, beat him, and held him under a street pump for a generous dousing. Later, Mitchell wrote to the *Federal Republican* to tell his story. Calling his assailants a "mob composed of a mixture of felons, outcasts, and unprincipled villains, seasoned with a few assassins, without character or property, and fermented by blood thirsty foreigners and the dregs of the world," Mitchell demonstrated the talent that must have contributed to his unpopularity. He accused city officials of instigating the violence against him, and named two aldermen who participated. He went on to say that the board of aldermen was composed mainly of drunkards, swindlers and charlatans.[33]

When the Republican editor of the *Georgia Express* in Athens heard about Mitchell's fate with the mob, he printed an editorial message for Hobby: "Your turn next."[34] His threat proved empty, however, as Hobby's press was not disturbed.

Violence or threats of violence occurred throughout the country. In Virginia, the Alexandria *Gazette* publisher was told to stop his anti-war sentiments[35], and in Richmond, the editor of the *Virginia Patriot* wrote the governor when threats of destruction reached him.[36] In Pennsylvania, a mob attacked the publisher of the Norristown *Herald* and shut down his operation.[37] During the war, in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, the *Essex Patriot* was burned by an unruly mob in 1813.[38] And in 1814, *Missouri Gazette* editor Joseph Charless, even though Republican in persuasion, persisted in complaining about the habits of military men on the frontier, which included gambling and drinking, and resulted, in his opinion, in poor military performance. Political opponents arrived at his door in 1814 with weapons and threats, but no acts of violence resulted. Charless continued printing as usual.[39]

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[33] Georgetown *Federal Republican*, 3 August 1812.
[34] Athens *Georgia Express*, 26 June 1812, quoted in Talmadge, "Georgia's Federalist Press and the War of 1812," 498-99.
[35] Alexandria *Gazette*, 22 June 1812, and 18, 18, and 25 August 1812.
[36] Augustine Davis to James Barbour, 29 June 1812, Executive Papers, cited in Myron F. Wehtje, "Opposition in Vírginia to the War of 1812," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 78 (1970): 65-86.
[37] Philadelphia *Register*, reprinted in Alexandria *Gazette*, 12 August 1812.
[38] Boston *New-England Palladium*, 23 June 1812.

The violent incidents did not daunt other Federalist editors. Indeed, in New England, the radical newspapers continued expressing their antiwar, anti-Madison sentiments unabated. Collectively, Federalist newspapers away from the scenes of violence denounced the anti-press acts as criminal. *New-York Evening Post* editor William Coleman headlined an editorial on the Baltimore riot with "Murder of the Friends and Advocates of Peace by a Lawless Mob," and called the Baltimore *Whig* editor who had instigated trouble a "villain."[40]

Anti-press violence was not restricted to Republicans against Federalists. The Republican print and administration organ, the *National Intelligencer*, was the object of British attack during the summer of 1814 when the British sailed up the Patuxent River and soldiers invaded the nation's unprepared capital. One of the best accounts of the burning of Washington and the attack on the newspaper was included in a letter of the wife of Samuel Harrison Smith, the former owner of the *National Intelligencer*. She wrote to her sister that when the British reached Washington City, General Cochburn forced a young man to accompany him into the abandoned President's House. There they found a table set for dinner, so they sat down and drank to "Jemmy's" health. Cochburn only referred to Madison by the name of "Jemmy," and to Joseph Seaton as "Josey." The British general collected "trophies" from the President's House (one of Madison's old three-cornered hats and Dolly Madison's chair cushion) and muttered "pleasantries" about them "too vulgar to repeat," (perhaps that he had seen neither heads nor tails of the first family). Cochburn then left, and the mansion was set into flame. At the office of the *National Intelligencer*, citizens gathered and asked Cochburn to spare the office because of its proximity to other buildings that would also burn. "Well," said Cochburn, "good people I do not wish to injure you, but I am really afraid my friend Josey will be affronted with me, if after burning Jemmy's palace, I do not pay him the same compliment,--so my lads, take your axes, pull down the house, & burn the papers in the street." Cochburn, his officers, and the soldiers were "perfectly polite" to the citizens. Cochburn asked one young woman, "Now did you expect to see me such a clever fellow? Were you not prepared to see a savage, a ferocious creature, such as Josey represented me?"[41] Another report of the destruction of the *National Intelligencer* quoted Cochburn as saying "Be sure that all the C's are destroyed, so that the rascals can have no further means of abusing my name as they have done."[42]

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[39] William H. Lyon, *The Pioneer Editor In Missouri 1808-1860*, (Columbia, Missouri, 1965), 16.
[40] *New-York Evening Post*, 31 July 1812.

Media historian Gerald Baldasty has offered evidence that editors served as leaders of political parties, forming "the nucleus of political organization in the 1820s and 1830s."[43] During the War of 1812, also, editors were not merely the sycophants of politicians or party platforms, but served as community leaders, political leaders, and sometimes, independent voices expressing views contrary to the party's mainstream.[44] Several editors corresponded with Madison throughout the war years, and sometimes offered advice or assistance.

Philadelphia publisher Mathew Carey repeatedly urged Madison to end the "gross and abominable lies" of the printers who were attacking him. An Irishman by birth, Carey came to America in 1784 to escape arrest for printing revolutionary views. He settled in Philadelphia and became a Jeffersonian Republican. He supported the rechartering of the Bank of the United States, and this alienated him from other prominent Republicans such as William Duane. Carey asked the president to support a national effort take the truth to the people to stop the Federalist attacks. Madison's answer was not surprising. He said he preferred local efforts and no government sponsorship of such efforts. He told Carey his only hope was that "the wicked project of destroying the Union of States is defeating itself."[45]

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[41] Gaillard Hunt, Ed., "Washington in the Hands of the British, From the Diaries and Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard)," in *Scribner's* 40 (1906): 433-434.

[42] Charles Ingersoll, *Historical Sketch of the Second War between the United States of America and Great Britain*, (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1849), 189.

[43] Gerald Baldasty, "The Press and Politics in the Age of Jackson," *Journalism Monographs* 89 (1984):2.

[44] For an essay on the trends in historical thought regarding the party press, see William David Sloan, "The Party Press, 1783-1833: Political Sycophant or Party Leader?" in *Perspectives on Media History*, (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991), 58-73.

Carey later wrote "The Olive Branch," a widely read political book that called for fighting political factions in the United States to unite against Great Britain.[46] One historian called the book "the most influential piece of political writing published on this side of the Atlantic during the War of 1812."[47] Carey said he wrote the book in a nonpartisan spirit, and later called it one of the most important achievements of his life.[48]

Ebenezer Smith Thomas, the nephew of Isaiah Thomas, published the Charleston, South Carolina *City Gazette* during the war years, and in his *Reminiscences of the Last Sixty-Five Years*, Thomas reveals his role as community leader, his desire for editorial independence, and his influence in Washington. As he planned a trip to Washington, people in the community asked him to persuade the Secretary of Navy to restore the barges that had protected inlets used to carry produce to market. He was firm with the Secretary, and did secure the promise. While in Washington, Madison authorized Monroe to offer Thomas the Office of Commissioner of Loans for South Carolina, but Thomas refused, saying that he had sometimes differed from the administration in the past, and he wanted to maintain his independence.[49]

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[45] Carey to Madison, 1 August 1812, 24 September 1812, and Madison to Carey, 19 September 1812, and Madison to Carey, 12 September 1812, Madison Papers, Library of Congress.

[46] Mathew Carey, *The Olive Branch: or Faults on Both Sides, Federal and Democratic, A serious appeal on the necessity of mutual forgiveness & harmony to save our common country from ruin*, (Philadelphia, 1814). Carter, "Mathew Carey and 'The Olive Branch,' 1814-1818."

[47] Edward C. Carter, II, "Mathew Carey and "The Olive Branch," 1814-1818," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (October, 1965) 399-415.

[48] Earl L. Bradsher, *Mathew Carey, Editor, Author, and Publisher* (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1912), 57.

Thomas did not consider fighting in the war, because it would have meant shutting down his newspaper. He did find a substitute, who he "uniformed and equipped according to the law, and agreed to give him a dollar per day in addition to government pay."[50] When a brigadier general announced to the troops that substitutes would not be allowed, Thomas complained to his friend the governor, who in turn, set the brigadier general straight.[51]

Hezekiah Niles' *Weekly Register* is considered to have been ahead of its time because it offered adequate space for opposing points of view, but during the War of 1812, Niles emerged as an Anglophobe, and published horror stories about British and Indian atrocities. Later in life, he related an incident that surely must have contributed to his hatred of the British. During the American Revolution, when his mother had been pregnant with him, a British soldier had pointed a bayonet at her and threatened "to kill two rebels at once." Niles did not fight in the war, but repeatedly attacked the British and the Indians in his *Weekly Register*. On April 24, 1813, Niles printed the following story about an Indian massacre:

> The situation of Mrs. Kennedy was shocking beyond description. She having been pregnant, her body was found entirely naked, cut open and the child taken out and hung on a peg in the chimney. Her entrails were scattered all about the door and the hogs were eating them.[52]

William Duane of the Philadelphia *Aurora*, another influential editor who corresponded with Madison to offer advice and support, received the appointment of Adjutant General of the 4th Military District, even though he had damaged his strong ties to the White House by opposing Madison, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin, and their efforts to recharter the Bank of the United States. Still, he did not oppose the war or support DeWitt Clinton, Madison's Republican opponent for the presidency, and therefore did not break totally with the administration. He continued correspondence with Madison throughout his presidency. When General William Hull suffered the humiliating defeat, in which he surrendered Detroit without a battle or even a shot fired, Duane wrote Madison to express his sympathy. When the New York militia refused to cross into Canada to support troops that were defeated at the Battle of Queenstown, Duane wrote to Secretary of State Monroe to urge harsh punishment of the offenders. After Madison's reelection and the appointment of John Armstrong as the new Secretary of War, Duane received his adjutant general appointment and in the spring of 1813, he turned over the *Aurora* to a young protégé. The *Voice of the Nation* made fun of his appointment by saying that Duane should ask Madison "to confer the rank of Commander in Chief on his wise head. Lord what a splutter he would make in Canada."[53]

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[49] Ebenezer Smith Thomas, *Reminiscences of the Last Sixty-Five Years*, (Hartford: Case, Tiffany and Burnham, 1840), 64-67.
[50] Ibid, 62.
[51] Ibid, 62.
[52] Letter from a gentleman at Kaskaskia, in *The Weekly Register*, IV, 24 April 1813, 135.

Prior to his appointment, even Duane's publishing interests had been military in nature. He had gained access to the War Office library and studied war strategies from European military books. He had wanted to educate the public about military training and discipline in particular. In June of 1812 he had published his *Handbook for Infantry,* which Congress later adopted as an official guide for the United States militia. Duane already had a small amount of military experience, having served in 1808 as a Lieutenant Colonel in charge of a rifle regiment. He had taken charge of Fort Mifflin near Philadelphia, but his plans had proven too ambitious for the War

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[53] Kim Tousley Phillips, *William Duane, Radical Journalist in the Age of Jefferson*, (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1989), Chapter 10. William Duane to James Madison, 20 September 1812, Madison Papers, Library of Congress. William Duane to Monroe, 23 October 1812, Monroe Papers, Library of Congress. *Voice of the Nation*, 16 December 1813.

Department, and they had sent a professional army officer to outrank Duane. He had soon resigned his commission.[54]

Duane's mother had taken him from America back to the family property in Ireland when he was a child, and she had wanted desperately for her son to become a Catholic priest. Duane had married at 19, though, and a Protestant girl at that, and his mother had disowned him. He had published a newspaper in India briefly, but when he gave voice to Indian soldiers' grievances he was jailed and deported. In London he had become a newspaper reporter, and had watched his radical friends jailed by the British and charged with treason. After moving to America, Duane opposed anything resembling monarchy and anything expressing pro-British sentiment.[55]

Duane was not the only editor to serve in the military. In 1813, when the British fleet appeared near Washington City, the people feared invasion. *National Intelligencer* editors Joseph Gales, Jr., and William Winston Seaton, both under 30 years of age, volunteered as District of Columbia militiamen, and seven workers from their shop joined them. The newspaper ran a notice asking its subscribers to be forgiving if more mistakes than usual appeared. By July 27 the invasion threat had ended, and the two had returned to work. The newspaper had suffered in their absence.[56]

Joseph Gales was only 24 when he became the proprietor of the Washington *National Intelligencer*. Because of his youth, the administration did not allow him to publish any views on State Department matters without the approval of Secretary of State James Monroe. Gales frequently received notes from Monroe which explained administration policies. The careful guidance of the administration is understandable; the *National Intelligencer* served to disseminate the views of the Madison administration to newspapers across the nation and around the world.[57]

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[54] Phillips, *William Duane*, Chapter 9.
[55] Jonathan Daniels, *They Will Be Heard, America's Crusading Newspaper Editors*, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1965), 42-44.
[56] William E. Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 94-99.

Gales also received help in responding to the serializing of a popular pamphlet in the *New-York Evening Post*, "Mr. Madison's War--A Dispassionate Inquiry . . . by a New England Farmer," which argued that the declaration of war was unjustified. It said Madison "is undertaken for *French* interests, and in conformity with repeated *French* orders," and it urged voters to "displace the *man alone who is responsible for this war*--I mean Mr. Madison." *Evening Post* Editor William Coleman introduced the antiwar pamphlet by saying, "I hasten to perform a substantial service to the public, by extending its circulation to the utmost of my power." Republicans reacted to the pamphlet in defense of the president, who offered only his customary silence. Richard Rush, Attorney General, wrote that Joseph Gales was "too immature to wield the national press against such treason and ferocity" and therefore Rush contributed an editorial attacking the Federalists for "the falsehood, the malice and the folly which their polluted columns are daily disgorging," especially their accusations that Madison had formed an alliance with Napoleon.[58]

Other editors did not join the military, but either developed or tried to boost political careers. Following the Baltimore riots, Alexander Hanson ran for a Maryland congressional seat and was elected from Montgomery County. Other Federalists capitalized on the anti-Republican sentiment which had developed in Maryland because of the riots, and they were able to capture an overwhelming majority in the state legislature at the next elections. They were even able to win the governor's seat.[59]

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[57] Washington *National Intelligencer*, 27 July 1813, and issues containing excerpts from Gales' diary, 8 August, 12 September, and 30 July 1857. Josephine Seaton, *William Winston Seaton of the National Intelligencer*, (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1871) 111-12. Monroe to Joseph Gales, Jr., 3 April 1812, Monroe Papers, cited in Ames, *A History of the National Intelligencer*.
[58] "Mr. Madison's War: A Dispassionate Inquiry," serialized in *New-York Evening Post*, 31 July through 10 August 1812. Quotes are from 31 July and 6 August issues. The pamphlet was authored by John Lowell, a Boston lawyer. Rush to Ingersoll, 16 August 1812, and Washington *National Intelligencer*, 18 August 1812, both quotes in Irving Brant, *James Madison, Commander in Chief, 1812-1836*, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1961), 31.

At least one editor had his eyes on the White House. Matthew Lyon of Kentucky had published newspapers when he lived in Vermont to publicize his political views. He had been the first victim of John Adams' national sedition law in 1798 and was one of those rare Republicans who opposed the War of 1812. A former New Englander, Lyon was not reelected to his congressional seat in Kentucky after he came out in opposition to the war. He was staunchly opposed to the separatist ideas of New England, however. He offered his candidacy in opposition to James Madison in the presidential election.[60]

William Cobbett, who had returned to England following a libel suit that stopped his publication in America, was especially active in England during the war years. Just in time for the war, he had finished a jail sentence for having libeled the king. Some American newspapers reprinted his antiwar essays. In 1813, in true Cobbett fashion, he began reminding the British press of its earlier claims. "That press. . . asserted that America would be totally ruined by six months of war; that the people would not pay the taxes necessary to carry it on; that the President, for only barely talking of war, would be out of his chair," he said. He also reminded the British press that they had predicted the American Navy would be "swept from the ocean in a month."[61]

Coverage of the war in the United States consisted primarily of the publication of official and private letters. Several war journals were established, all published privately, and these included *The Military Monitor*, *War Journal*, and *The War*, not all of which survived for the duration of the war. The latter publication, called a "troop paper" by one historian,[62] reported the Baltimore and Savannah mob incidents, and while it insisted that it was "not to be suspected of abetting mobs," it denounced antiwar sentiment.[63] Two magazines offered many stories about American victories on the seas, the *Port Folio* and the *Analectic*, which was edited by young Washington Irving. It is interesting to note that all newspapers, even those staunchly Federalist newspapers advocating secession in New England, provided coverage of the war and even celebrated victories.

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[59] Baltimore *American and Daily Advertiser*, 18 November 1812.

[60] "An Address of Matthew Lyon" (circular), in Aleine Austin, *Matthew Lyon, "New Man" of the Democratic Revolution, 1749-1822*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981), 147.

[61] William Cobbett, *Political Register*, London, January 1813.

The first major actions of the war were the humiliating surrender of Detroit without a battle by General William Hull, and a stunning victory by the General's relative, Captain Isaac Hull, on the sea. The *National Intelligencer* suppressed the embarrassing news of Hull's defeat and published only earlier letters from Hull until Federalist prints made fun of it and forced it to report the truth. The *New-York Evening Post* commented on September 5, "The government Gazette has, at last, published the articles of capitulation by which Gen. Hull surrendered himself and his army to the British," and added that the administration, rather than Hull, was responsible for the defeat. As for Isaac Hull's victory, the *Evening Post* said Hull "has immortalized himself in the capture of the *Guerriere*."[64]

Radical Federalist newspapers had a field day with the news of the destruction of Washington. Interestingly, the *Federal Republican* offered a straight, factual account (except for the editorial use of all-caps in one instance) and reserved editorial opinion for its editorial columns. The August 26 edition reported, "No pursuit was kept up by the enemy, who entered Washington at his leisure, and in the evening, with ONE HUNDRED MEN, destroyed the capitol, the president's house, and the treasury office." The paper had no sympathy for the destruction of the *National*

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[62] Alfred Emile Cornebise, *Ranks and Columns, Armed Forces Newspapers in American Wars*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993), 3-4.
[63] *The War*, 4 July 1812.
[64] *New-York Evening Post*, 5 September 1812.

Intelligencer, and published an editorial entitled "The Triumphant Mob of Baltimore, & the Victorious British Army in our Capital--Contrasted." The *Federal Republican* criticized "Joe Gales" for "treacherously" abandoning his office to the enemy and suggested that had the England-born Gales been captured, the British would have returned him to England for trial. Another editorial revealed another instance of the *Intelligencer*'s suppression of news:

> The Court Gazette boasts that the President has continued to be "active" ever since "the fate of war befell the Capital." For once at least the truth is told in the Intelligencer. The President has been marvelously active ever since the battle. The first night he fled 18 miles. . . . If Mr. Gales has not at hand the proof of the great and continued activity of his master since the battle, it can be furnished to him.[65]

The *New-York Evening Post* expressed its outrage at the loss of the capital by asking, "Where have our men at the head of affairs been all this time? . . . Was there no means of defending the property of the nation?--Can men who manage in this way be fit to govern a great and free people?"[66] Even a Republican newspaper called the defense of the city "disgraceful" and blamed the Secretary of War .[67]

The *Intelligencer* resumed publication on September 26, 1814. In that issue, it appropriately ran a copy of Francis Scott Key's "Star-Spangled Banner," which had been written after the recent all-night bombardment by the British on Fort McHenry.[68]

As 1814 ended, a handful of New England leaders met at the Hartford Convention, reportedly to discuss secession from the union. The *National Intelligencer* noted the vituperation of the New England prints against the war. "The federal papers generally, but those particularly of Boston have arrived at a pitch of depraved acrimony in their political discussions which has no parallel in the history of any country," causing the *Intelligencer* editors to feel "grief as well as indignation."[69] As it turned out, the meeting in Hartford produced only a list of grievances that the delegates intended to take up with the Madison administration in Washington. No mention of secession was listed in the report.

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[65] Georgetown *Federal Republican*, 26 August 1814.
[66] *New-York Evening Post*, 27 August 1814.
[67] Philadelphia *Democratic Herald*, 27 August 1814, reprinted in the New York *Herald*, 29 August 1814.
[68] Washington *National Intelligencer*, 26 September 1814.

In New England, opposition to the war was not only printed in Federalist newspapers, but preached from the pulpits and published in pamphlet form. "If at the present moment no symptoms of civil war appear they certainly will soon--unless the courage of the war party should fail them," said one pastor in New England.[70] Another came out with a pamphlet that proclaimed Napoleon the Antichrist.[71] Another minister in New England said "As Mr. Madison has declared war, let Mr. Madison carry it on. . . ."[72] Some of the newspapers in New England were not radical prints, but they, like other newspapers in the region, published the proceedings of the Hartford Convention. The convention proved to be tame in its purpose; still, opposition newspapers made fun of the convention and its delegates, who were sent to Washington to discuss grievances with the administration. The delegates were interrupted in their journey by news of peace.

In New Orleans, news of an incredible victory was delayed for weeks, and the anticipation was documented in the newspapers. The Federalist newspapers accused the *National Intelligencer* of suppressing news of a defeat at New Orleans.[73] When newspapers distant from New Orleans finally received new of Jackson's victory, editors across the country, regardless of party persuasion, responded with joy. All ran letters received from General Jackson with headlines proclaiming the jubilation of victory. "ALMOST INCREDIBLE VICTORY!" said the *Intelligencer* on February 7, 1815. Even the *Federal Republican* was moved to say, "the more we contemplate the glorious victory achieved by Gen. Jackson, the more we are wont to applaud and admire his heroic ardour, and the steady valor of his faithful soldiers," before it contrasted the victory with the defeat at Washington.[74] On February 16, the *Intelligencer* filled its pages with editorials from other newspapers commenting on the victory and proclaiming Jackson a hero. Even in New England, in the same issue with proceedings of the Hartford Convention, the Hartford *Connecticut Courant* called the Battle of New Orleans a "BRILLIANT VICTORY," and ran the same correspondence printed in the Republican newspapers.[75]

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[69] Ibid., 1 December 1814.
[70] Carey, *The Olive Branch*, 45.
[71] Abraham Burnham, *Antichrist. A Discourse, Addressed to the Congregational Church and Society in Pembroke, New-Hampshire, on the Annual Fast, April 14, 1814,* (Concord, New Hampshire: George Hough, 1814).
[72] Carey, *The Olive Branch*, 329.
[73] Georgetown *Federal Republican*, 3 February 1815.

Peace was another instance of unanimous joy in all party papers. The *National Intelligencer* headlined the news with "The Peace. Americans! Rejoice! Republicans, rejoice! Federalists, rejoice! Rejoice, all men, of whatever party ye be!" The *Federal Republican* said, "No intelligence has occasioned half so much joy as that which we notice," but no major position changes occurred due to the news of peace; the same page contained an editorial that accused the president of lying. In subsequent issues it reminded the administration that the cause of "free trade and sailor's rights" had not been achieved by the war.[76]

Hezekiah Niles of *The Weekly Register* was overcome by the news. He had been strongly opposed to making peace with Great Britain without insuring that impressment would cease. "Accursed be the American government," he had said, "and every individual of it, who . . .shall agree to make peace with Great Britain, until ample provision shall be made for our impressed seamen, and security shall be given for the prevention of such abominable outrages in future." Yet *The Weekly Register* announced news of peace on February 18, 1815, under a 12-point headline of "Glorious News!" and continued in smaller print with "Orleans saved and peace concluded. The star spangled banner in triumph shall wave O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave." Niles printed the Treaty of Ghent in its entirety, but never mentioned that the issue of impressment was suspiciously absent.[77]

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[74] Ibid., 7 February 1815.

[75] Hartford *Connecticut Courant*, 14 February 1812.

[76] Washington *National Intelligencer*, 16 February 1815. Georgetown *Federal Republican*, 14 and 22 February 1815.

The delegates from the Hartford Convention, on their way to Washington, turned around when they heard news of peace, and newspapers poked fun at them as they made their way home. "Missing," said the New York *National Advocate,*

> Three well looking, responsible men, who appeared to be travelling towards Washington, disappeared suddenly from Gadsby's Hotel, in Baltimore, on Monday evening last, and have not since been heard of. . . Whoever will give any information to the Hartford Convention of the fate of these unfortunate and tristful gentlemen by letter (post paid) will confer a favor upon humanity. The newspapers, particularly the Federal newspapers, are requested to publish this advertisement in a conspicuous place, and send their bills to the Hartford Convention.[78]

In conclusion, aside from some instances of news suppression, coverage of the war was remarkable when viewed in the context of the times, which were primitive by modern press standards. The telegraph had not yet been invented and roads were bad, so delays were inevitable, yet newspapers eventually received all the news they cared to print, of the war in the United States, the proceedings of Parliament and the Napoleonic wars in Europe. Several war journals emerged for the purpose of recording events of the war. Most newspapers of each party affiliation included letters from generals and battle witnesses, and therefore many objective, truthful accounts of battles were published in Federalist and Republican prints. In many papers, editorial remarks were distinguishable from news of the war, both in content and in layout. Newspaper staffs were very small, so editors copied news, letters, and editorials from other newspapers--especially the larger, metropolitan ones such as the Republican *National Intelligencer* and the Federalist *New-York Evening Post*, newspapers near the scene which could offer first-hand accounts, and from Hezekiah Niles' *Weekly Register*.

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[77] *The Weekly Register* II, 18 April 1812, 119; and *The Weekly Register* VII, 18 February 1815, 385-389.

[78] New York *National Advocate*, February, 1812, quoted in Francis F. Beirne, *The War of 1812*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1949), 333-334.

Some editorials during the war period could be considered spirited, sometimes humorous, and entertaining; however, many from each party print were harsh, to say the least. Radical Federalist prints called Madison and Republican editors all manner of evils, and the Republican editors screamed back with equally acerbic accusations and vicious name-callings. A Republican newspaper called the New-England Federalist papers exemplifications of "every species of lying, from bold and positive falsehoods, down to total and partial suppression of the truth, embracing, in the infuriate range, the most malignant and criminal distortions of all the measures and policy of the government, no matter what their course, no matter what their object."[79] These types of remarks, however, were generally confined to editorial columns or in introductions to certain correspondences. Scurrility did not infiltrate every article.

Federalist editors believed they were exercising their First-Amendment rights by opposing the war. The previous, pro-French sentiments of Republicans made Federalists suspect that war against England was a means to help Napoleon win his European war. Many Republicans, on the other hand, viewed the radical Federalists as traitors because of their fierce opposition to the war and their history of pro-British sentiment. The talk of secession did much to confirm the Republicans' beliefs, though the mild results of the Hartford Convention calmed their fears.

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[79] Washington *National Intelligencer*, 18 August 1812.

Leading Federalist and Republican editors emerged as community leaders, political leaders, and patriots. A few served as confidantes to the president. Some had the power and courage to support views contrary to party platforms.

Despite their differences, party newspapers in the United States during the War of 1812 covered the war to the best of their capabilities. Even if they opposed the war, they still covered it, and they rejoiced in American victories and lamented (and lambasted) American defeats. Lack of governmental restrictions on the press resulted from James Madison's reserve in inhibiting press freedom; however, some governmental restraint might have prevented much of the anti-press violence, which was ferocious. The number of violent incidents rivals, if not surpasses, those of any other period in American journalism history. It was a trying time for some of the editors engaged in the war of words in the theater of the party press.

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"A TINCTURE OF MADNESS": THE FAILURE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S WEST INDIES PRINTING PARTNERSHIPS

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"A TINCTURE OF MADNESS": THE FAILURE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S WEST INDIES PRINTING PARTNERSHIPS

ABSTRACT

Benjamin Franklin intended to establish a publishing venture in the West Indies as an expansion of his network of printing partners and associates. The Franklin network, the largest printing alliance in early America, was intended to enlarge the scope of early-American journalism, produce revenue, enable Franklin to promote workmen whose character impressed him, and disseminate his ideology of moral virtue to a mass audience.

After originally planning to send David Hall to the West Indies, Franklin kept Hall in Philadelphia, instead sending trusted worker Thomas Smith to Antigua in 1747. Smith began diligently, publishing books, pamphlets and a newspaper, The Antigua Gazette. However, Smith grew complaisant, dying just a few years later from alcoholism and disease.

Franklin's hand-picked replacement for the West Indies partnership was his own nephew, nineteen-year-old Benjamin Mecom. He had already begun showing signs of mental instability, and became more reckless and quarrelsome during his stint in Antigua. Mecom soon returned to the mainland, where family members recognized he was becoming consumed by "a tincture of Madness." He eventually became violently insane.

Franklin established other journalistic ties to the region, but his two efforts to establish West Indies partnerships had failed. This represented the first, and perhaps most abject, failure in his generally successful half-century of creating printing partnerships.

"A TINCTURE OF MADNESS": THE FAILURE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S WEST INDIES PRINTING PARTNERSHIPS

"I have already three Printing-Houses in three different Colonies, and purpose to set up a fourth if I can meet with a proper Person to manage it, having all Materials ready for that purpose," Benjamin Franklin wrote to his London printing supplier William Strahan in 1743. In Strahan's estimation, that "proper person" was David Hall, a Scottish worker in Strahan's shop. According to Strahan, Hall "understands his Business exceedingly well; is honest, sober, and Industrious to the last Degree." (1)

Franklin's ambition was to establish a printing operation and newspaper in the West Indies and send a partner to manage the shop, as he had previously in Charleston and New York. He had two primary motivations for creating his printing partnerships. First, he viewed the prospective site as an untapped or underserved market which would enable him to expand the geographic reach and social importance of his printing partnerships and business connections. Besides his Philadelphia shop, Franklin owned printing houses in New York and Charleston, operated by James Parker and Elizabeth Timothy, respectively, plus his family tie to sister-in-law Ann Franklin's printing house in Newport, Rhode Island. These partnerships and business affiliations formed the foundation of the Franklin printing network, a loosely structured alliance of eighteenth-century printers. It grew to be the most prominent and geographically extensive of the early-American printing organizations, lasting from the 1730s to the 1790s. Stretching from New England to the

West Indies and comprising more than two dozen members, the network altered practices in both the colonial and European printing trades by providing capital to finance printers. As an economic entity and source of mutual support, Franklin's network was integral to the success of many printers and played a vital role in the development of American journalism. The network crafted by Franklin and his associates served to enlarge the scope of the early-American printing trade, hasten the dissemination of information and opinion to a mass audience and impress the importance of journalism upon the collective consciousness of eighteenth-century America, thereby playing a central role in establishing the legacy of social importance which the press has enjoyed to the present day. (2)

His second motivation for creating printing partnerships was altruistic. Besides its financial benefits, Franklin intended his journalism to provide moral education to a mass audience. He viewed his almanac "as a proper Vehicle for conveying Instruction among the common People." He utilized his Pennsylvania Gazette in the same educational manner, recalling, "I consider'd my Newspaper also as another Means of communicating Instruction, & in that View frequently reprinted in it Extracts from the Spectator and other moral Writers, and sometimes publish'd little Pieces of my own." Throughout his life, Franklin viewed these published moral lessons as service to man, and therefore to God. Envisioning the press as the optimal means to convey his moral instruction, and believing the press to be truly beneficial to the improvement of colonial society, Franklin formed partnerships with the expectation that his associates would also exhort their readers to righteous conduct. As an important mechanism for disseminating Franklin's ideology of virtue, the printing network was an influential shaper of a national moral character. (3)

Impelled by these dual motivations, and intrigued by Strahan's recommendation, Franklin offered Hall employment as a journeyman in his Philadelphia shop, intending to groom him for the West Indies partnership. As he wrote to Strahan in November, 1745, "I now have every Thing ready for Mr. Hall to go to the W. Indies." (4) However, Hall's competence and stability proved invaluable to Franklin, enabling him to contemplate retirement and begin thrusting himself into public affairs. With Hall gradually taking charge of the Philadelphia printing shop, Franklin assumed greater responsibility in philanthropic, political and scientific circles. His efforts to benefit the public during the 1740s resulted in the invention of an improved fireplace, the creation of a plan for a volunteer militia and the growth of the subscription library that Franklin had made his inaugural sally into civic service. (5) Hall's competence and diligence enabled Franklin to retire from the daily labors of printing and pursue other interests, and the plan for expansion to the West Indies was postponed. Franklin concluded that Hall's services in Philadelphia were too valuable to the attainment of his own public ambitions, and thus elevated Hall to partnership and control of the most influential printing house in colonial America. (6)

However, neither Hall's accession to the helm of the flagship printing office nor Franklin's consuming interest in public affairs, which offered the prospect of augmenting his prominence and authority, dampened Franklin's enthusiasm for establishing a West Indies printing house. Instead, Hall's management of the Philadelphia shop helped Franklin devote more time to expanding his printing network, his income and his sphere of influence. Creating a link in the West Indies was a vital part of Franklin's long-range plans for benefiting public virtue, domestic journalism and his personal wealth.

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The West Indies was generally regarded in colonial America as the place to make a fresh start, before the interior lands across the Appalachian Mountains were opened for settlement. Just as the North American colonies were separated from England by time, distance and ocean, and thus semi-autonomous, so was the West Indies separated from America and the rest of the British Empire. The early history of the West Indies was characterized by political disorder, stemming from the protracted public debate over whether the proprietors or an assembly should govern the islands. The confusion resulted in minimal government presence. The limited sovereignty and pervading sense of geographic isolation weakened the rigidity of social and commercial classes, making the island chain an ideal place to which one could abscond and start over, in a less structured society. (7)

Many colonists of Franklin's acquaintance took advantage of that option. Childhood friend John Collins journeyed to the West Indies to escape debt and failure. Soon after, John Rogers, Deborah Read's first husband, fled there to avoid prosecution for debt and bigamy. Franklin's erstwhile Philadelphia printing rivals Samuel Keimer and David Harry also traveled to the West Indies, envisioning Barbados as a tropical balm for their failures. The region also nearly became a new frontier for Franklin in earlier years. After struggling as a journeyman printer in England, he was hired by Quaker businessman Thomas Denham. He proposed to send Franklin to the West Indies and set him up as a merchant, but died before that plan could be executed. Denham's heirs dismissed Franklin, compelling him to return to printing. (8)

The region's geographic isolation, rugged terrain and frequently merciless weather, plus the preponderance of settlers who had been outcasts and failures elsewhere in the British Empire, created a social, intellectual and moral climate of laxity. During military maneuvers in Jamaica, Colonel John Stewart described the island in discouraging terms. He attributed his soldiers' high mortality rate there to malaria and the effects of liquor, the imbibing of which was exacerbated by stifling humidity. He wrote, "this Island instead of being a place of refreshment must always prove their grave without they could be incamped in some clear'd part of the mountains where they might be cool & at a distance from Rumm." Alcohol proved to be a means of escape from the weather for many islanders, as did roisterous conduct. Calling the West Indies "a most infernal place for worrying a poor Devil," a friend advised Franklin's grandson Benjamin Franklin Bache not to allow his wedding ceremony and honeymoon to occur there. "I am told they will not suffer a fellow to get to Bed till morning" with his bride, Richard Smith wrote, for "if he goes before, they will be sure to haul them both out & toss them in a sheet or pelt them with oranges -- this is not a Custom among the Vulger but a Fashion seized on all the Islands." (9)

Caribbean residents possessed a materialistic, self-gratifying attitude, which one historian called the "'live fast and die young' ethos of the region," concluding that "the cheapness of life in the tropics ... suggests a stunted and deficient society." Anna Maria Shirley, daughter of the provincial governor, compared West Indian society unfavorably with England. "The amusement[s] are not quite so Numerous as London boasts of," she wrote from the Bahamas. "Danceing is their most Favorite one, which I wonder at in so [dismal] a Climate." She told her correspondent that she preferred not to associate with West Indian residents, noting, "as to our society I cannot say a great deal for it. West India & English Educations are very different. Its a small place & commonly in those the people do not agree so well as in large ones. It is nitheir proper nor agreable in our Situation to have any thing to do with their little annimossitys." A minister in Antigua also noted the educational deficiencies of the islanders. Acknowledging receipt of six copies of a Franklin leaflet on astronomy, the Rev. William Shervington responded drily, "One would have sufficed for our island, as we are not overburthen'd with men, who have a taste that way." Morality was equally scarce among West Indies denizens, who relished "swearing, Lying, Drunkenness & Whoredom," according to one writer, who decried the "Extravagancy, voluptuousness and riotous living" that abounded in the islands. (10)

This lifestyle was considerably influenced by the lucrative but risky production of sugar, which led planters to exploit both land and slaves in the pursuit of short-term -- and often short-lived -- financial gain. One eighteenth-century diarist wrote of an Antigua planter who "was not thought to feed, and treat his Negroes properly, tho' on their labour, depended the advancement of his fortune." (11) Compounding the economic concerns was the fact that the West Indies were required by majesterial order to import goods from England, rather than the more proximate North American colonies. An American traveling in the region called the arrangement "odious tyranny," and "from which tyranny results the escorbitant price of the most necessary articles of life in the West Indies, and the consequent high price paid for the produce of the soil." With a volatile economic situation, an inhospitable climate and a pervasive sense of moral abandon, West Indies residents, especially men, had short lifespans. A historian called the islands a "demographic disaster area." (12)

In this arduous setting, the two printers whom Franklin had driven there, Harry and Keimer, experienced difficulties in both the personal and vocational realms. Harry settled in Barbados in 1730 and hired Keimer as his assistant, prompting Franklin to wryly observe, "this Apprentice employ'd his former Master as a Journeyman." Succumbing to the wanton lifestyle of the islands, Harry "became more dissipated, and his profits from printing were not equal to his expenditures," according to Isaiah Thomas, who printed in the West Indies just a few decades later. Franklin reported that during Harry's brief career, he "dress'd like a Gentleman, liv'd expensively, took much Diversion & Pleasure abroad, ran in debt, & neglected his Business." These were all cardinal sins to Franklin, who regarded thrift and hard work as two of the foremost virtues. Harry returned to Pennsylvania in 1731 and yielded the shop to Keimer, who promptly began printing the Barbadoes Gazette, the first known newspaper in the Caribbean islands. Keimer lasted longer than Harry, remaining in Barbados until his death in 1738, but his livelihood was threatened at one point by a charge of libeling a member of the king's council. (13)

Despite the dismal demography and climate, and despite the island chain's history of journalistic failure, Franklin wanted to establish a printing house in the West Indies. His motives were multi-faceted. Several of his reasons were routine and could be said of any of his journalism partnerships: financial gain, promotion of one of his trusted workers, ambition to foster the geographic spread of his network and dissemination of intellectual enlightenment. However, Franklin also had three special reasons to extend his reach to the West Indies.

The first was benevolent. The moral laxity of the West Indies fostered widespread alcoholism, which Franklin viewed as a profound social evil. Since his days as a London journeyman, Franklin had loathed the effects of alcohol on people's character and work habits. He decried the London pressmen's incessant consumption of beer, which he called "a detestable custom." This "constant sotting" left many of the workers in perpetual debt. Franklin's character sketches of others in the autobiography, including his first printing partner Hugh Meredith, blamed their failures on alcohol. In his newspaper, Franklin repeatedly printed news accounts and essays that underscored the evils of drink in his effort to teach temperance, to which he attributed his "greater Clearness of Head & quicker Apprehension," as well as his "long-continu'd Health, & what is still left to him of a good Constitution." Franklin regarded temperance as an essential human grace, and intended a West Indies partnership as a means to impart this message of virtue to an area in need of it. (14)

Franklin's second motivation for extending his reach to the West Indies was pragmatic and provincial. Chiefly to support his journalistic operation and lower his operating costs, Franklin had become the Philadelphia postmaster in 1737. This duty afforded him the advantage of sending and receiving mail for free, for any purpose, including newspapers from other regions, from which news could be clipped and reprinted in his Pennsylvania Gazette. For obvious financial reasons, Franklin found postal employment "very suitable to me," as he told a correspondent. Also, serving as postmaster enabled Franklin to acquire information first, because the colonial post office served as a clearinghouse for information about other colonies and nations. These perquisites of the position "facilitated the Correspondence that improv'd my Newspaper" and "encreas'd the Number demanded, as well as the Advertisements to be inserted." Although there were several small printing houses in the West Indies, very little information from the islands reached the more populous and prominent North American colonies. Franklin saw the benefit of establishing a printing shop, and especially a newspaper, in the region to serve as a news source for his Pennsylvania Gazette -- news he could receive free of charge, before competing printers. This benefit not only "facilitated the Correspondence," it made his newspaper more attractive to readers and advertisers. Franklin made copious use of this advantage, reprinting two dozen news items from his partner's Antigua Gazette between 1748 and 1751. (15)

Third and finally, a West Indies partnership provided Franklin the anticipated satisfaction of succeeding where his former nemeses Harry and Keimer had failed. By selecting a partner who was competent (Keimer's weakness, in Franklin's opinion) and of dependable character (Harry's deficiency), Franklin was confident of triumph. His choice for this alliance was Thomas Smith, who had spent several years as a journeyman printer for Franklin's partner James Parker in New York, and then Franklin and Hall in Philadelphia. (16)

Like Hall, Smith had demonstrated the work ethic and good character Franklin sought in representatives of his financial and evangelic interests. With Hall remaining in Philadelphia instead of setting up in the West Indies as originally planned, Smith was the next worker in line for promotion "who had behaved well," in Franklin's all-important estimation. Echoing a familiar theme in his partnership decisions, Franklin lauded Smith's character in a letter to Strahan. "I have lately sent a Printing-house to Antigua, by a very sober, honest and diligent young Man, who has already (as I am informed by divers Hands) gain'd the Friendship of the principal People, and is like to get into good Business," Franklin wrote several months after Smith arrived. Franklin recommended that Strahan supply the Antigua shop with books and stationery, assuring him that Smith "will make you good and punctual Returns." (17)

Diligence, honesty and sobriety were qualities Franklin prized. Almost as much, though, Franklin respected the ability to win favor with influential persons, as Smith had apparently done. A significant portion of Franklin's autobiography recounts meeting, impressing and benefiting from prominent benefactors. He wrote without embarrassment about these episodes, some of which bordered on sycophancy, as "exemplifying strongly the effects of prudent ... conduct in the commencement of a life of business," he told a friend. Others, however, saw it differently. John Adams called Franklin "a base flatterer," and printer John Holt observed that Franklin's allegiances and public actions "seemed calculated to secure himself an Interest with the prevailing Party." (18)

Smith's partnership with Franklin was under the same terms as the other partners in the printing network, with Franklin receiving one-third of the profit. Franklin opened accounts with Smith on April 16, 1748, when he charged Smith for limes, meat and printing supplies. Their relationship began well, with Franklin pleased to add to the fold a new partner who "always behav'd extreamly well." Smith began his work industriously, publishing a newspaper and books involving poetry, agriculture and medicine. (19) However, within three years Smith became overwhelmed with financial troubles. Upon setting up at Kerby's Wharf in St. John's, Antigua, Smith discovered West Indian residents were accustomed to acquiring goods on liberal credit terms. This created a cash-flow problem for the printer and caused him to fall behind in repaying his own debts, especially to his silent partner Franklin and his supplier Strahan. Strahan complained to Hall in February, 1751 and also griped to Franklin the following month. Embarrassed at having promised Strahan that Smith would make "punctual Returns," Franklin told the London businessman, "I have wrote to Smith at Antigua to quicken him in discharging his Debt to you." He added, "I am concern'd at your laying so long out of your Money, and must think of some Way of making you Amends." (20)

Smith continued the Antigua Gazette until at least September, 1751, but afterward became ill and died the following summer. In dour fashion, Franklin blamed the death on alcohol, which in his view caused many unfortunate occurrences. "My late Partner there enjoy'd perfect health for four Years, till he grew careless and got to sitting up late in Taverns," Franklin informed a correspondent. An alternate possibility is that Smith contracted yellow fever in the intemperate climate. Whatever the cause, Smith died without heirs, and with half of his revenue on credit and uncollected. To recoup some of the money, Franklin engaged the Antigua merchant firm of Birkett and Booth, but nearly three years later he was still awaiting a remittance. (21)

While trying to settle Smith's affairs from overseas and understand how the "very sober, honest and diligent" worker he and Parker had groomed for success could have bungled the finances and possibly drank himself to death, Franklin acted quickly to find a replacement for his Antigua printing house. He knew the vacancy on the island would not remain unfilled for long, particularly because a printer there would have no competition for the government printing contract, and he was determined to send another associate promptly to succeed Smith.

Perhaps because he had no other promising journeymen worthy of promotion at that time, or perhaps because he was so dismayed by Smith's failure that he felt more comfortable opting for a family member, Franklin sent his nineteen-year-old nephew Benjamin Mecom to St. John's. Mecom was the son of Franklin's favorite sister, Jane Mecom, and a nephew Franklin particularly liked. "I have a very good opinion of Benny in the main, and have great hopes of his becoming a worthy man," Franklin told Jane, adding that the nephew named after him "has many good qualities, for which I love him." Two weeks after Mecom sailed for Antigua, Franklin wrote reassuringly to Edward and Jane Mecom in Boston. "Antigua is the Seat of Government for all the Leeward Islands, to wit, St. Christophers, Nevis, and Montserrat. Benny will have the Business of all those Islands, there being no other printer." He noted Mecom "will find the Business settled to his Hand, a Newspaper establish'd, no other Printing-house to interfere with him or beat down his Prices." Seeking to assuage parental fears that Mecom would meet with the same fate as Smith, Franklin praised the island's salubrious climate, adding that the only danger to his health was alcohol, "which I have caution'd Benny to avoid, and have given him all other necessary Advice I could think of relating both to his health and Conduct, and hope for the best." (22)

With an important printing location at stake, Franklin felt he could rely on a family member to avoid the temptations and mistakes which overwhelmed Smith, and to succeed where Smith had failed. However, Mecom had been showing signs of mental instability since youth. Mecom's parents chose to engage their son in the printing trade, to follow in the footsteps of his prosperous uncle, and so made arrangements through Franklin for their son to be apprenticed in Parker's shop. "I am confident he will be kindly used there, and I shall hear from him every week," Franklin wrote to Edward and Jane Mecom. Aware of his nephew's recalcitrant demeanor, Franklin cautioned the parents, "You will advise him to be very cheerful, and ready to do every thing he is bid, and endeavour to oblige every body, for that is the true way to get friends." (23)

It soon became evident that Mecom did not heed his uncle's advice. Mecom wrote a letter to his parents which indicated a major rift with the placid Parker. Mecom complained of beatings, insufficient clothing and poor treatment during a bout with smallpox. Franklin defended Parker as having "in every respect done his Duty" and labeled Mecom's allegations "groundless stories" and "little Misunderstandings." Franklin explained that Mecom stayed out all night, devised excuses to avoid attending church and once tried to run away to sea aboard a privateer, but he dismissed these actions, as well as Mecom's complaints about Parker, as being "commonly incident to boys of his years." (24)

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The roilings continued until Mecom, Parker and Franklin mutually agreed to end the apprenticeship prematurely as a concession to Mecom's craving for independence and his already-proficient printing skills. Mecom promised to repay Parker for the balance of his time, and accepted Franklin's invitation to succeed Smith in Antigua. Franklin was concerned about Mecom's maturity, however, and specifically admonished him to govern his conduct. Franklin was unconvinced this instruction would suffice, telling Mecom's parents that "After all, having taken care to do what _appears to us to be for the best_, we must submit to God's Providence, which orders all things _really for the best_." (25)

Trusting that a relative would succeed on his own, and yet dubious about the young man's unstable character, Franklin sent Mecom to Antigua as a partner in August, 1752, under the same terms as Smith. In recommending him to Strahan's attention, though, Franklin chose his words carefully, reluctant to give the young man his unqualified endorsement. "I have settled a Nephew of mine in Antigua, in the Place of Mr. Smith, deceas'd," he wrote. "I take him to be a very honest industrious Lad, and hope he will do well there, and in time be of some Use to you as a Correspondent." Mecom revived the _Antigua Gazette_ in October or November, 1752, enabling Franklin and Hall to resume reprinting West Indies news items, and published a book of poems and a schoolbook. However, Mecom soon began complaining that the terms of the partnership were too confining, especially the requirement that he remit one-third of the profits to Franklin. "I fear I have been too forward in cracking the shell, and producing the chick to the air before its time," Franklin lamented to Jane Mecom just three months after Benny arrived in Antigua. (26)

Under Mecom's direction, the Antigua printing house continued to lose money. Mecom blamed this on the financial terms of the partnership, but both Franklin and Strahan were beginning to realize that Mecom was an inept manager of money and supplies. When Mecom ordered an enormous stock of books, Strahan decided to warn Franklin before filling the order. "Pray keep him within Bounds, let him have good saleable Sortments, but small, and do not suffer him to be more than Fifty Pounds in your Debt, if so much," Franklin requested. Franklin had learned from Smith's experience that West Indian residents were dilatory about paying for printed matter, an inclination Mecom did not seem to understand. "He is a young Lad, quite unacquainted with the World," Franklin proffered to rationalize Mecom's imprudence. Strahan may not have imposed these restraints to the necessary degree, for Mecom fell deeper into the London supplier's debt the next year. "I do not approve at all of B. Mecom's being so much in your Debt, and shall write to him about it," Franklin told Strahan, urging him to demand the money and thereby compel the young printer to be fiscally responsible. (27)

In part to pacify the querulous Mecom regarding the partnership terms, and in part to reward his "diligent and careful" work, Franklin allowed Mecom to keep all the profits, provided he contribute toward his mother's rent payments and send Franklin some sugar and rum. His ultimate plan, as he told Jane Mecom, was to give the printing house to Benny, "but as he was very young and unexperienc'd in the World, I thought it best not to do it immediately but to keep him a little dependent for a Time, to check the flighty Unsettledness of Temper" he sometimes exhibited. Franklin did not tell his partner of his planned beneficence, though. Mecom, chafing under Franklin's form of control, asked to purchase the printing house outright. Franklin ignored his query. This angered Mecom, who indignantly announced he was abandoning Antigua. Franklin ascribed the disintegration of the partnership to the fact that Mecom "lov'd Freedom, and his Spirit could not bear Dependance on any Man, tho' he were the best Man living." (28)

In the years following his 1756 departure from Antigua, Mecom failed at publishing ventures in Boston, New York, New Haven and Philadelphia, all the while sinking farther into debt and losing his sanity. His financial bungling prompted Parker to revoke the power of attorney he had granted Mecom, and a Connecticut grand jury presented Mecom for violating a colonial statute by "willingly and obstinately without any reasonabel excuse" refusing to attend church services for a month. During the 1760s, as his career was floundering, Mecom occasionally visited Zechariah Fowle's printing house in Boston, where Isaiah Thomas was an apprentice. Mecom "was handsomely dressed, wore a powdered bob wig, ruffles and gloves; gentlemanlike appendages which the printers of that day did not assume, and thus apparelled, would often assist, for an hour, at the press," Thomas recalled. Mecom's foppish penchant for wearing his coat, wig, hat and gloves while doing the often grimy work of a printer, and his odd demeanor, inspired Fowle's pressmen to nickname him "Queer Notions" behind his back, Thomas wrote. (29)

Franklin had viewed Mecom's behavior problems as mere "Fickleness" and an inability to "get fix'd to any purpose," but he excused these as foibles of youth. However, as Mecom grew older and his peculiarities became more pronounced, Franklin was finally forced to admit a serious problem existed. "I begin to fear things are going wrong with him," he confessed to Strahan in 1763. (30)

Mecom's inability to manage money, compounded by the financial burden of supporting his large family, overwhelmed him. Franklin helped manage Mecom's bankruptcy, paying off some of his debt and interceding with creditors, but he could do little to halt his nephew's mental deterioration. Network member William Goddard hired Mecom as a journeyman, but Mecom proved unreliable and left. He failed to hold a job at several other Philadelphia printing houses, and ultimately applied for a liquor license with the intention of turning part of his home into a tavern. "We are not fond of the Prospect it affords," he candidly told city officials in his petition, "further than as it may contribute to support a Number of young growing Children, whose Welfare we would earnestly and honestly endeavour to secure." This effort, like his others, was a failure, and Mecom grew dependent on Franklin's wife Deborah and son William for succor while Franklin was in England, all the while expecting Franklin to once again set him up in a printing house. "His Pride and Laziness are beyond any Thing I ever knew, and he seems determin'd rather to sink than to strike a Stroke to keep his Head above Water," William disgustedly wrote to his father. "I look upon him to have a Tincture of Madness." (31)

The "tincture" spread until it enveloped Benjamin Mecom's mind, and he became one more woeful member of a tragic family. By 1775, only three of Jane Mecom's twelve children were alive. Her daughter Jane Collas was plagued by depression and disease, and both Benjamin and his brother Peter were deranged. Their conditions prompted their mother to lament that they had made her life miserable, due to their "Distracted" state. Peter learned the trade of soap-making, but had been exhibiting signs of his affliction by age eighteen. Viewing Peter's conduct through his own lens of virtue, Franklin misunderstood the symptoms. The uncle ascribed Peter's behavior to laziness and suggested the boy needed to acquire "a habit of industry." He later realized the inaccuracy of his diagnosis and assumed some of the financial burden for boarding Peter at a private home, euphemistically referring to him as Jane's "unhappy Son." Peter died in late 1778 or early 1779, bringing to an end Jane's "Perpetual anxiety." Peter, she told Franklin, "has been no comfort to any won nor capeble of Injoying any Himself for many years." (32)

Benjamin Mecom experienced the same mental deterioration as his brother. After New Jersey officials judged Mecom to be violently insane and "very Dangerous," Franklin arranged for him to be confined in a New Jersey asylum, with Franklin assuming most of the expenses. Mecom remained there "in His deplorable state," as Jane described it, until he wandered away in 1778 and was never heard from again. (33)

Before Mecom had left Antigua in 1756, he recommended another printer as a successor to the Antigua printing house. Disappointed by his two failed partnerships there, and not knowing this worker, thus being unable to assess his character (and by this time a recommendation from the inept Mecom would likely have been to the unnamed printer's detriment), Franklin refused, offering only to sell him the shop. (34)

Although Franklin declined to devise a third partnership in Antigua, he maintained journalistic ties to the West Indies for years after Mecom's departure. In 1754 Jamaica printer William Daniell solicited the firm of Franklin and Hall to provide him with paper, saying he was "Realy much in Want, and Do Not Intend to apply anywhere Else." The duo supplied Daniell for two years, until his death in 1756, at the same time exchanging news with him. (35) Some scholars have identified Daniell as a Franklin partner, but that is unlikely. (36) Daniell was printing by 1749, but it was not until five years later that he introduced himself to Franklin and Hall, asking them to supply him with paper, potash and other items and inquiring about their charges. Also, the terms under which Franklin's partners operated makes it clear that Daniell was merely a business associate. According to the terms of his standard contract, Franklin was to be the sole supplier of printing materials, and would split the cost with the partner. Thus, there would have been no need for Daniell to make "a Proposial for Dealing with you for paper." (37)

In the 1760s, Franklin also had a business relationship with William Smith, who published The Freeport Gazette; or, the Dominica Advertiser in Dominica at least from 1765 to 1767. (38)

Like the affiliation with Daniell, this link also led scholars to assume a partnership existed, when there is no evidence to support this conclusion. (39)

Another Franklin tie to the West Indies was William Dunlap, who owned a printing press in Bridgetown, Barbados from 1762 to 1772. A cousin of Franklin's wife Deborah, he printed in Lancaster and Philadelphia, served as Philadelphia postmaster and later became an Episcopal clergyman. Probably inspired by Franklin's silent partnerships in distant regions, Dunlap formed an alliance with George Esmand to print the Barbados Mercury. (40)

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With his basic firmament of printing partners and affiliates thriving in Charleston, Philadelphia, Newport and New York, Franklin decided to send a printer to the West Indies to supplement the growth of Franklinesque journalism. Part of the project's allure was that it was a speculative but promising printing market. Franklin was enthused by the fact that there was minimal competition in the West Indies, and none on the island Franklin selected. More significantly, his plan offered great promise for the dissemination of moral instruction. (41)

Despite its potential, the West Indies represented a geographic and entrepreneurial challenge to Franklin. Journalistic predecessors such as Harry, whom Franklin once regarded as "a powerful Rival," had tried and failed to establish a foothold in the islands, creating doubts of whether a West Indies link in Franklin's journalistic chain would prove sufficiently sturdy. (42)

Because of the risk, the Antigua printing house Franklin brought to fruition was a site at which to experiment, not to expend the most valuable resources. Hence, Franklin kept Hall in Philadelphia rather than sending him to the West Indies, as he originally intended, because Hall's services were too valuable to the attainment of his public ambitions. Franklin therefore sent Smith to Antigua. Smith seemed to be cut from the same industrious cloth as Franklin's other partners, but this partnership failed due to alcoholism and illness, just as burgeoning insanity contributed to the demise of Franklin's arrangement with Mecom several years later.

Both Smith and Mecom had proven unable to operate a profitable business, but where Smith was complaisant, Mecom was recalcitrant. Mecom had demonstrated this character quirk since his stormy apprenticeship with the forbearing Parker, and it became exacerbated as he grew older. Franklin sent Mecom to the West Indies for profit, but also for Mecom's own benefit. Franklin wanted to give him a fresh start in the wake of his unsettling apprenticeship, in a land that had been used by many others, in various walks of life, for the same purpose. But under Mecom's direction the West Indies shop continued to be a financial failure for Franklin, and he closed the operation after Mecom's return to the mainland.

The existence of the Franklin network was due in large measure to Franklin's ability to judge personal character and business acumen. He repeatedly conveyed his belief that the adherence to a resolute work ethic is "the natural means of acquiring wealth," for "he that gets all he can honestly, and saves all he gets (necessary Expences excepted) will certainly become RICH." Franklin believed that hard work yielded other blessings than wealth, for "God gives all things to industry," but whatever the motivation, Franklin sought the moral virtue of honest labor in his workmen. When he found it, he considered those employees for partnerships. Franklin shepherded two of the eighteenth century's best printers, James Parker and David Hall, into successful partnerships because of his ability to gauge their character, as well as their talent. However, the West Indies experiment ranks as a notable exception. What stung Franklin the most was that his laudatory assessments of his two partners -- one of his top workers and then one of his nephews -- proved wrong. He had praised Smith as a "very sober, honest and diligent young Man," and Mecom as a "very honest industrious Lad," but both had disappointed him by proving they lacked the work ethic and stable character Franklin sought. (43)

Franklin's ability to estimate virtue, a crucial component of his selection of workmen "who had behaved well," was reinforced by the partnerships in Charleston, New York and Philadelphia, but received a jarring blow in the West Indies. This may explain why relatively little information has survived about his partnerships there, and why the Antigua printing house, Smith and Mecom are not mentioned in his autobiography. There was little room for failure in Franklin's self-constructed image of the prudent businessman, and he did not wish to advertise his own failures on matters of importance to him, particularly his business, because they would detract from his credibility as a moral instructor. This was the underlying goal of his autobiography, as he revealed to Benjamin Vaughn in 1788. "I omit all facts and transactions that may not have a tendency to benefit the young reader by showing him from my example, and my success in emerging from poverty, and acquiring some degree of wealth, power, and reputation, the advantages of certain modes of conduct which I observed," he wrote. (44)

Franklin evidently did not regard his West Indies foray as a suitable example for young readers.

NOTES

1. William Strahan to James Read, January 17, 1743, Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection, American Philosophical Society; Benjamin Franklin to Strahan, July 4, 1744, in Leonard W. Labaree, et al., eds., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin 30 volumes to date (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959 --), 2:409-10 (hereafter PBF).

   The Franklin papers are rife with examples of Franklin ordering supplies from Strahan. See, e.g., Franklin to Strahan, April 14, 1745, in PBF, 3:21-22. For a biographical treatment of Hall, see Robert Hurd Kany, "David Hall: Printing Partner of Benjamin Franklin" (Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1963).

2. For more on the Franklin printing network, see Ralph Frasca, "From Apprentice to Journeyman to Partner: Benjamin Franklin's Workers and the Growth of the Early American Printing Trade," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 114 (April 1990): 229-48; Idem, "Benjamin Franklin's Printing Network," American Journalism 5 (No. 3 1988): 145-58; Idem, "The Virtue of the Art: Benjamin Franklin's Printing Network and the Moral Aspirations of the Early-American Press" (Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1994). For the argument that Franklin's network was a shaper of a national moral character, see ibid., esp. the conclusion chapter.

3. J.A. Leo Lemay and P.M. Zall, eds., The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin: A Genetic Text (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981), 93-94 (hereafter Autobiography). For examples of Franklin's belief in mutually serving God and man, see Frances M. Barbour, comp., A Concordance to the Sayings in Franklin's Poor Richard (Detroit: Gale, 1974), September 1747, 83; Benjamin Franklin to Josiah and Abiah Franklin, April 13, 1738, in PBF, 2:202-04.

4. Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, November 16, 1745, in PBF, 3:46.

5. "An Account of the New-Invented Fire-Places," 1744, in PBF, 2:419-46; "Plain Truth," November 17, 1747, ibid., 3:180-218; Autobiography, 72. Franklin chronicles his mid-century public activities in considerable detail in the Autobiography, 108-29. For Franklin's role in establishing the subscription library, see Korty, "Eighteenth-Century American Libraries," 1-72; Edwin Wolf II, "At the Instance of Benjamin Franklin": A Brief History of the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1731-1976 (Philadelphia: Library Company of Philadelphia, 1976).

6. "Articles of Agreement with David Hall," January 1, 1748, in *PBF*, 3:263-67. For other references to the Franklin-Hall partnership, see, e.g., Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, June 1, 1747, in *PBF*, 3:140; Franklin to Strahan, July 29, 1747, ibid., 3:165; *Autobiography*, 119.

7. Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972). For an overview of cultural and business affairs in the colonial West Indies, see Jack P. Greene, "Society and Economy in the British Caribbean during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *American Historical Review* 79 (December 1974): 1499-1517; J.H. Parry and Philip Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies* 3d ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 1971).

For the ethnohistory of one island, see Jerome S. Handler and Frederick W. Lange, *Plantation Slavery in Barbadoes: An Archaeological and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

8. *Autobiography*, 33-34, 50-53, 68-69. The obscure Denham is discussed in F.B. Tolles, "Benjamin Franklin's Business Mentors: The Philadelphia Quaker Merchants," *William and Mary Quarterly* 4 (January 1947): 60-69. On the eclectic nature of Denham's business, ranging from selling Madeira wine to German indentured servants, see his advertisements in the *American Weekly Mercury*, July 12, 1722, December 18, 1722.

9. John Stewart to Lord Stair, September 10, 1741, Osborn Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University; Richard Smith to Benjamin Franklin Bache, June 12, 1790, Society Collection, American Philosophical Society.

10. Trevor Burnard, "Inheritance and Independence: Women's Status in Early Colonial Jamaica," *William and Mary Quarterly* 48 (January 1991), 99; Anna Maria Shirley to Miss Norris, June 13, 1769, September 31, 1775, Osborn Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University; William Shervington to Benjamin Franklin, June 20, 1753, in *PBF*, 4:509; Hannah Cooper, "A Faithful Warning to the Inhabitants of Barbadoes," circa 1740, Pemberton Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

11. Thomas Hulton, "Account of Travels," n.d., Miscellaneous Collections, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University. For planters, profits and sugar production, and their influence on West Indian society, see Greene, "Society and Economy in the British Caribbean during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries;" Frank Wesley Pitman, *The Development of the British West Indies, 1700-1763* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917), 1-41; Lowell J. Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763-1833* (New York: Century, 1928), 3-36.

12. Great Britain Board of Trade Report, circa 1752, Miscellaneous Collections, Library of Congress; "Letter of an American Traveller to His Friend in Connecticut," July, 1794, Osborn Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 334.

For the contention that "Life expectancy was abysmally low, families were characteristically broken, deaths usually exceeded births, and the number of young adults was extremely high," see Burnard, "Inheritance and Independence," 99.

13. *Autobiography*, 68-69; Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* ed. Marcus A. McCorison (New York: Weathervane, 1970), 604. On the early newspapers of the West Indies, see Howard S. Pactor, comp., *Colonial British Caribbean Newspapers: A Bibliography and Directory* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1990).

Harry and Keimer may have chosen Barbados because it was the wealthiest and "most British" of the West Indian islands. See Richard S. Dunn, "The Barbados Census of 1680: Profile of the Richest Colony in English America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 26 (January 1969): 3-30; Patricia A. Molen, "Population and Social Patterns in Barbados in the Early Eighteenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly* 28 (April 1971): 287-300; Gary A. Puckrein, *Little England: Plantation Society and Anglo-Barbadian Politics, 1627-1700* (New York: New York University Press, 1984).

14. *Autobiography*, 15, 46-47, 64-66, 79, 88, 120-21. For Franklin's newspaper writings on the subject, see *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 1, 1733; October 24, 1734. Franklin began writing on the topic in the newspaper press at age 16. See "Silence Dogood, No. 12," *New-England Courant*, September 10, 1722, in *PBF*, 1:39-41.

15. "Philadelphia Post Office Record Books, 1737-53," in *PBF*, 2:178-83; Alexander Spotswood to Benjamin Franklin, October 12, 1739, ibid., 2:235-36; Franklin to Peter Collinson, May 21, 1751, ibid., 4:135; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 28, 1735; *Autobiography*, 101.

For the relationship between the press and the post office, and the commercial advantages of postmasterships, see Jerald E. Brown, "'It Facilitated the Correspondence:' The Post, Postmasters and Newspaper Publishing in Colonial America," *Retrospection* 2 (no. 1, 1989): 1-15; Richard B. Kielbowicz, *News in the Mail: The Press, Post Office and Public Information, 1700-1860s* (New York: Greenwood, 1989); Idem, "The Press, Post Office, and Flow of News in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 3 (Fall 1983): 255-80; Wesley E. Rich, *The History of the United States Post Office to the Year 1829* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924).

For Franklin's postmastership, see Ruth L. Butler, *Doctor Franklin, Postmaster General* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1928); Arthur Hecht, "Pennsylvania Postal History of the Eighteenth Century," *Pennsylvania History* 30 (October 1963): 420-42.

For more on the *Antiqua Gazette*, see Wilberforce Eames, "The Antigua Press and Benjamin Mecom, 1748-1765," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 38 (October 1928): 303-48.

16. Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, October 19, 1748. in *PBF*, 3:22. For Franklin's assessment of Keimer and Harry, see *Autobiography*, 27, 57, 68-70.

17. *Autobiography*, 108; Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, October 19, 1748, in *PBF*, 3:322.

18. Benjamin Franklin to Louis-Alexandre, duc de La Rochfoucauld, October 22, 1788, in John Bigelow, ed., *The Works of Benjamin Franklin* 12 volumes (New York: Knickerbocker, 1904), 11:444; John Adams to Francis Adrian Van der Kamp, March 19, 1793, John Adams Letters, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; John Holt to William Goddard, February 26, 1778, Book Trades Collection, American Antiquarian Society.

19. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, June 28, 1756, in *PBF*, 6:464; George Simpson Eddy, *Account Books Kept by Benjamin Franklin: Ledger "D," 1739-1747* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1929), 116. For information on the products of Smith's press, see Bradford F. Swan, "A Checklist of Early Printing on the Island of Antigua," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 50 (3d quarter 1956), 285-92.

20. Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, October 19, 1748, in PBF, 3:322; Franklin to Strahan, November 27, 1751, ibid., 6:277; Franklin to Strahan, June 28, 1751, ibid., 4:142; Strahan to David Hall, February 13, 1751, David Hall Papers, American Philosophical Society.

21. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, September 14, 1752, in PBF, 4:356; Franklin to William Strahan, November 27, 1755, ibid., 6:277; Franklin to James Birkett, March 1, 1755, ibid., 5:500.

22. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, circa June 1748, in PBF, 3:304; Franklin to Edward and Jane Mecom, September 14, 1752, ibid., 4:356-57.

23. Benjamin Franklin to Edward and Jane Mecom, circa 1744-1745, in PBF, 2:448. Isaiah Thomas errs, of course, by claiming Mecom served his apprenticeship with Franklin. Thomas, History of Printing in America, 140.

24. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, circa June 1748, in PBF, 3:301-04; Franklin to Edward and Jane Mecom, September 14, 1752, ibid., 4:356-57.

Mecom's flight from his apprenticeship to become a sailor may have been inspired by his uncle Josiah Franklin and his cousin William Franklin, both of whom boarded privateers as young men after having witnessed the "prizes brought in, and quantities of money shared among the men, and their gay living." Franklin confessed that he too was tempted to do the same as a youth, which may explain why he dismissed Mecom's action as inconsequential. Autobiography, 10-11; Franklin to Jane Mecom, circa June 1748, in PBF, 3:302-03.

25. Benjamin Franklin to Edward and Jane Mecom, September 14, 1752, in PBF, 4:356-57.

26. Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, May 9, 1753, in PBF, 4:487; Franklin to Jane Mecom, November 30, 1752, ibid., 4:385; Eames, "The Antigua Press and Benjamin Mecom," 325; Douglas C. McMurtrie, Early Printing on the Island of Antigua (Evanston, Illinois: Privately Printed, 1943), 5-6. For instances of The Pennsylvania Gazette reprinting Antigua news during Mecom's tenure, see December 7, 1752 and succeeding issues.

27. Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, April 18, 1754, in PBF, 5:264; Franklin to Strahan, November 27, 1755, ibid., 6:277.

28. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, June 28, 1756, ibid., 6:464-65.

29. Declaration of James Parker, September 18, 1766, James Parker Papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University; New Haven Grand Jury to Jared Ingersoll, Justice of the Peace, April 14, 1766, James Parker Papers, Beinecke Library, Yale University; Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 141-42.

30. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, June 28, 1756, in *PBF*, 6:465; Franklin to William Strahan, June 2, 1763, ibid., 10:271.

31. Benjamin Mecom to the Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen of Philadelphia, September 11, 1770, Wallace Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; William Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, circa January 2, 1769, in *PBF*, 16:5-6. For Mecom's debts and creditors, see e.g., Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, June 25, 1764, ibid., 11:240; James Parker to Benjamin Franklin, November 6, 1765, ibid., 12:355; John Balfour to Benjamin Franklin, November 21, 1765, ibid., 12:383. Mecom's final printing endeavor was in 1774, when he worked as a journeyman in the Burlington, New Jersey shop of Isaac Collins. Thomas, *History of Printing in America*, 394.

32. Jane Mecom to Catharine Greene, November 25, 1775, in *PBF*, 22:272; Benjamin Franklin to Mecom, May 21, 1757, ibid., 7:215; Franklin to Mecom, May 30, 1757, ibid., 7:2:221-22; Franklin to Jonathan Williams, November 28, 1763, ibid., 10:384; Mecom to Franklin, August 15, 1778, ibid., 27:257-58; Mecom to Franklin, February 14, 1779, ibid., 27:541-42. For more on the tragic Mecom family, see Claude-Anne Lopez and Eugenia W. Herbert, *The Private Franklin: The Man and His Family* (New York: Norton, 1975), 108-15.

33. John Lawrence and William Smith to Benjamin Franklin, July 19, 1776, in *PBF*, 22:517-18; Jane Mecom to Franklin, August 15, 1778, ibid., 27:257; Mecom to Franklin, February 14, 1779, ibid., 28:541.

34. Benjamin Franklin to Jane Mecom, June 28, 1756, in *PBF*, 6:464-65.

35. William Daniell to Benjamin Franklin, November 16, 1754, ibid., 5:440; Daniell to Franklin and Hall, June 29, 1754, ibid., 5:364. For other correspondence relating to this business arrangement, see Daniell to Franklin, June 23, 1754, ibid., 5:355; Franklin to Deborah Franklin, circa 1754, ibid., 5:463; Daniell to Franklin, July 21, 1755, ibid., 6:111. See also Eddy, Ledger "D," 51-52, 72. For Daniell's service as government printer and his death, see Frank Cundall, "The Press and Printers of Jamaica Prior to 1820," Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society 26 (October 1916): 290-412; Idem, A History of Printing in Jamaica from 1717 to 1834 (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1935), 10, 33.

36. For example, see Bernard Fay, Franklin: The Apostle of Modern Times (Boston: Little, Brown, 1929), 233; Carl Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin (New York: Viking, 1938), 122.

37. William Daniell to Benjamin Franklin, June 23, 1754, in PBF, 5:355. For the clauses that "all Charges for Paper ... and other Things necessary to printing ... shall be divided into three equal Parts," with Franklin paying one of those parts and the partner paying the other two parts, and that the partner "shall not during the Term of the Copartnership aforesaid work with any other printing Materials than those belonging to the said Benjamin Franklin," see, e.g., "Articles of Agreement with Thomas Whitmarsh," September 13, 1731, ibid., 1:206-07.

38. For the scant evidence on Smith, see Douglas C. McMurtrie, The First Printing in Dominica (London: privately printed, 1932); Pactor, Colonial British Caribbean Newspapers, 40; Thomas, The History of Printing in America, 608-09.

39. Scholars assuming a partnership between Franklin and William Smith include Fay, Franklin: The Apostle of Modern Times, 233, Alfred M. Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America (New York: Macmillan, 1937), 31; John Clyde Oswald, Benjamin Franklin, Printer (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1917), 141; Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, 122. Despite this impressive array of biographers positing the same contention, all four make the assertion in a cursory manner and with neither details nor attribution. It is possible they may have simply relied on each other without independent verification.

40. Eustace M. Shilstone, "Some Notes on Early Printing Presses and Newspapers in Barbados," *The Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 26 (November 1958), 27-29; Bradford F. Swan, *The Caribbean Area* (Amsterdam: Vangendt, 1970), 18; Mary D. Turnbull, "William Dunlap, Colonial Printer, Journalist, and Minister," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 103 (April 1979): 143-65.

41. Franklin's partners in the West Indies discharged their responsibility for disseminating knowledge. Smith printed instructive essays and books on medicine and agriculture. Mecom published a grammar book and a broadside promoting lectures on electricity by Franklin's friend Ebenezer Kinnersley. In his newspaper, Mecom followed Franklin's practice of printing lengthy essays on the freedoms and responsibilities of the press. "Of the Use, Abuse, and Liberty of the Press, with a little Salutary Advice," from the pseudonymous "Reflector," appeared in the only extant copy of *The Antigua Gazette*, dated April 12, 1755 and in the possession of the American Antiquarian Society.

42. *Autobiography*, 68.

43. "Rules Proper to Be Observed in Trade," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 20, 1750; "Advice to a Young Tradesman, Written by an Old One," July 21, 1748, in *PBF*, 3:308; Barbour, *A Concordance to the Sayings in Franklin's Poor Richard*, 82; Benjamin Franklin to William Strahan, October 19, 1748, in *PBF*, 3:323; Franklin to Strahan, May 9, 1753, ibid., 4:487.

44. *Autobiography*, 108; Benjamin Franklin to Benjamin Vaughan, October 24, 1788, in Bigelow, ed., *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, 127-8. Franklin was particularly active in advocating virtuous conduct for young men. For example, see his essays "Advice to a Young Tradesman," July 21, 1748, in *PBF*, 3:304-08; "How to Get Riches," 1749, ibid., 3:349-50; "Rules Proper to be Observed in Trade," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 20, 1750; and "The Way to Wealth," July 7, 1750, in *PBF*, 7:326-50.

Abstract of "The Earnest Endeavor:" Andrew Brown's Role in Philadelphia's 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic

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As the debate over President Washington's Impartiality Proclamation divided the nation into political factions, and refugees from Santo Domingo streamed into the city, yellow fever returned to Philadelphia in the fall of 1793. When half of the inhabitants deserted the city and over 4,000 perished, the public sphere might easily have collapsed.

Andrew Brown, editor of The Federal Gazette, a newspaper that had assumed an impartial stance during the political debates, maintained the daily publication of his newspaper while the more prestigious Philadelphia newspapers suspended operations. In so doing, he allied with Dr. Benjamin Rush, an opponent of the Washington Administration's financial policies and an advocate of a conroversial cure.

Despite the availablility of an alternative cure--one proposed by the personal physician to Alexander Hamilton--Brown devoted his newspaper Rush's theories. Although his support of Rush compromised the impartiality of his newspaper, Brown was unwilling to acknowledge that he had done so, maintaining that he had served the city in the crisis by remaining impartial.

Although Brown returned to his impartial stance after the epidemic subsided, his conduct in the fall of 1793 provides excellent insight into the role of newspapers in the 1790s. Reared in a culture hostile to parties, many Americans struggled to remain non-partisan as partisan tensions rose. Despite efforts to do so and claims that he had, Andrew Brown did not remain impartial. Studying Brown and other impartial editors yields a different picture of the press in the 1790s--one that is anything but a "dark era."

'The Earnest Endeavor:' Andrew Brown's Role in Philadelphia's 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic

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As the newspaper debate over President Washington's Impartiality Proclamation divided the nation into political factions, and 2,000 refugees from the rebellion in Cap Francois, Santo Domingo streamed into the city, yellow fever returned to Philadelphia in the fall of 1793 after a thirty year absence. Half of the inhabitants deserted the city. Those who remained out of financial necessity, compassion, or skepticism watched as the ensuing epidemic claimed the lives of over 4,000 of the approximately 50,000 people in the nation's capital in a four-month period.

Despite President Washington's initial desire to relocate the seat of the federal government, the cabinet met in Germantown in November and Congress assembled in Philadelphia on December 2, 1793.[1] Although Governor Thomas Mifflin and the state legislature fled the city, Mayor Matthew Clarkson stayed, heading the Committee to Attend to and Alleviate the Sufferings of the Afflicted with the Malignant Fever which governed the city. Without the committee's distribution food, clothing, and money, the epidemic might have claimed far more lives.[2]

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[1] Dorothy Twohig, ed., The Journal of the Proceedings of the President, 1793-1797, (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 1981), p. 242n explains the controversy and Washington's decision. For the cabinet debates concerning the decision see Thomas Jefferson to Washington, October 17, 1793, Paul Leicester Ford, ed., The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1895), volume 6, p. 436, James Madison to Washington, October 24, 1793, Thomas Mason, ed., The Papers of James Madison, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1985), v. 15, p. 129. Alexander Hamilton to Washington, October 24, 1793, Harold Syrett, ed., The Papers of Alexander Hamilton, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), v. 15, pp. 373-376.

The symptoms of panic during the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia were remarkably similar to the symptoms of political panic which gripped the nation throughout the summer of 1793 in the wake of Washington's Impartiality Proclamation and Citizen Genet's arrival. As Federalist newspapers urged citizens to be vigilant against Genet's encroachments on American impartiality, Republican papers warned Americans about the administration's monarchical leanings. In the fall of 1793, doctors, local government officials, and anonymous polemicists bombarded Philadelphians, warning them about their health, not the nation's. Though the context changed from political to social and the encroachments from anarchy and monarchy to death and vigilance, unity remained the focal points of the pleas.[3]

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[2] During the epidemic, Governor Mifflin was re-elected. Harry Marlin Tinckom, The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790-1801, (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania History and Museum Commission, 1950) notes that 1,852 fewer residents of the city and of Bucks County voted in the election than had voted in the 1790 election. The state legislature abandoned the embezzlement case against John Nicholson, Comptroller General of Pennsylvania, Raymond Walters, Jr., "The Making of a Financier: Albert Gallatin in the Pennsylvania Assembly," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 70:3(1946)258-269. Phineas Bond, the British Consul General for the mid-Atlantic and southern states, fled the city. Joanne Loewe Neel, Phineas Bond: A Study in Anglo-American Relations, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1968), pp. 113-153. The French Consul DuPont was killed by the fever. Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, September 15, 1793, Ford, Jefferson, v. 6, p. 429.

In August 1793, Philadelphia boasted nine newspapers. While John Fenno's Federalist Gazette of the United States and Philip Freneau's Republican National Gazette printed numerous polemics supporting and condemning the issuing of the Impartiality Proclamation, others such as Andrew Brown, the editor of The Federal Gazette, maintained a moderate stance that he felt would best serve the community. Born in Ireland in 1744 and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, Brown came to America in 1773 as a British soldier. He defected from the British Army and fought with the patriots at Lexington and at Bunker Hill. After serving as Deputy Mustermaster General for the Eastern Department during the Revolution, Brown opened women's academies in Lancaster and in Philadelphia. When those ventures failed, Brown revived The Federal Gazette, a newspaper on which he had worked, in October 1788. An ardent supporter of the ratification of the Constitution, Brown sought a government printing contract in 1790. Supported by letters from Benjamin Rush and from William Bingham to Thomas Jefferson, Brown procured a State Department contract for printing the laws in Philadelphia in January 1791. By the Third Congress, Brown's policy of publishing the Congressional debates led him to hire James Thomson Callender as a stenographer. Brown attempted to maintain an impartial newspaper by publishing material written by both sides on any political issue. Despite Brown's opposition to the removal of the national capital to the Potomac River and other Jeffersonian ideas, Hamilton believed that Jefferson's patronage had swayed the editor against the administration. But Brown's conduct during the debates over the Impartiality Proclamation demonstrated that he sought to place his newspaper above the partisan fray.[4] When the epidemic struck, Brown continued to publish his newspaper while the more prestigious Philadelphia newspapers suspended publication. The Federal Gazette and Eleazer Oswald's Independent Gazetteer, a weekly, were the only two newspapers to publish throughout the epidemic. When the medical profession failed to achieve a consensus, Brown attempted to continue his impartiality. He could not. When the myriad cures offered to the public failed to halt the progress of the disease, Brown transformed his newspaper into a forum for the medical opinions of Benjamin Rush, a supporter of Brown's newspaper venture, an ardent Republican, an advocate of a radical plan of treatment, and an opponent of the cure promulgated by the doctors at Bush Hill, the hospital run by the city. By adopting this approach and by not suspending his operations, Brown held his community together in a time of panic, gave Philadelphians hope that they might survive the mysterious illness, and compromised the impartiality of his newspaper.

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[3] For the most recent overview of politics in this period, see Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, The Age of Federalism, (New York: Oxford University Press). In their only mention of the epidemic, they mistakenly state that Philip Freneau's National Gazette was the only newspaper remaining in Philadelphia when it folded on October. Ibid., p. 365.

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[4] Biographical information on Brown can be found in the American Biographical Archive, fiche 191, pp. 274-279. For additional information on his career and on his newspaper, see Madison Papers, v. 15, pp. 155 & 157; Hamilton Papers, v. 11, pp. 431-432, v. 15, p. 242; and Julian Boyd, ed., The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950-), v. 17, p. 391; v. 18, p. 700.

As partisan tensions rapidly escalated in the 1790s, many politicians realized the importance of having a newspaper editor represent their viewpoints. But like many Americans, Brown professed that political parties would doom republican government.[5] He kept his newspaper above the partisanship of the 1790s until he realized that his city was in grave danger. His response--partisanship--demonstrates the limitations of the republican notion of open public discourse.[6] A politically independent newspaper benefitted the public discourse most when other newspapers were virulently partisan. Due to the epidemic and the dwindling number of newspapers, open public debate became a hindrance to restoring calm to a city that desperately needed it. In the contracted public sphere, Brown was trapped between his desired impartiality and his public service quest. He increasingly found himself in the position previously occupied by such editors as Fenno and Freneau, choosing sides in the partisan debates. Like many others in the early republic, Brown tried to convince himself and others that his actions were not divisive--that he was above the growing partisan debate. He was not. In the ensuing years, partisanship increased and the number of editors able to maintain an impartial stance dwindled as the Republican and Federalist organizations expanded. Andrew Brown's role in the Philadelphia yellow fever epidemic demonstrates how editorial moderation became dysfunctional when unanimity seemed essential due to threats against the future safety of the republic. This paper will summarize the partisan debates of the summer of 1793, demonstrate Andrew Brown's role in those debates, and detail his descent into partisanship as a result of his publishing the writings of Benjamin Rush on the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in the fall of 1793.

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[5] See Michael Lienesch, "Thomas Jefferson and the American Democratic Experience: The Origins of the Partisan Press, Popular Political Parties, and Public Opinion," in Peter Onuf, ed. Jeffersonian Legacies, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), pp. 316-339. For a history of the anti-party tradition in America see William Chambers, Political Parties in a New Nation, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), Richard Hofstadter, The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), Ralph Ketcham, Presidents above Party: The First American Presidency, 1789-1829, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), and John Hoadley, Origins of American Political Parties, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986).

[6] For an interpretation of the importance of the printed medium in constructing and maintaining the public sphere, see Jurgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, originally published 1961, translated by Thomas Burger, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, (London: Verso Edition/NLB, 1983), and Michael Schudson, "Was There Ever a Public Sphere? If so, When? Reflections on the American Case" in Craig Calhoun, ed., Habermas and the Public Sphere, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

On April 5, 1793, Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton informed President Washington of the execution of Louis XVI of France and helped Washington prepare a list of thirteen questions for the cabinet concerning American policy. Though the cabinet agreed that a proclamation should be issued, they disagreed as to whether the President--as Hamilton argued--or Congress--as Jefferson did--should issue it and whether or not the document should contain the word "neutrality." Despite Jefferson's objections, Washington issued the Impartiality Proclamation April 22, 1793. Its issuing and publication provoked a debate over Presidential power. Hamilton, James Madison and other polemicists raged, and the debates endured into the early stages of the Philadelphia epidemic.[7]

While most Philadelphia newspapers took sides in the political debate, Brown's Federal Gazette remained moderate, publishing essays by Republicans and Federalists. Including the Pacificus and Helvidius essays, Brown published 30 Republican essays, 23 Federalist, and 12 that were moderate in tone between May 31 and October 1, the day he published the fifth and final Helvidius essay. In contrast to Brown's moderate style, Fenno published 33 Federalist polemics and 10 Republican ones; Freneau, 6 and 53. The Federal Gazette ranks as one of the most moderate newspapers of the summer debate, upholding Brown's belief of "how extremely incumbent [it is] upon all Printers to observe a rigid impartiality and independence."[8]

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[7] For a summary of the cabinet debate, see Syrett, Papers, v. 14, pp. 291-92; Twohig, Journal, pp. 120-126; Ford, Writings, v. 7, p. 436; Lawrence Kaplan, Colonies into Nation (New York: MacMillan Company, 1972), p. 223; Albert Hall Bowman, The Struggle for Neutrality, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1974), p. 51. Moncure Daniel Conway, Omitted Chapters in History Disclosed in the Life and Papers of Edmund Randolph (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1888), p. 202. For the Madison--Hamilton debate and its implications, see Letters of Pacificus and Helvidius, (Delmar, New York: Scholar's Facsimiles and Reprints, 1976); Merrill Peterson, Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 494; Joseph Charles, Origins of the American Party System, (Williamsburg: Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1956), p. 75.

When Brown published a polemic from one side, he usually balanced it with one from the other. Occasionally, he printed selections from both Fenno and Freneau on the same day. Five days after publishing Hamilton's last Pacificus essay, Brown began a series of Republican polemics by "An Old Vandalian" who argued that the United States should go to war to help France. Balancing that, Brown also published Popicola, who warned against such radical calls: "at a time when the press teems with publications intended to excite a spirit hostile to our peace and happiness, it becomes the duty of every friend to his country, as far as his abilities may extend, to counteract such an evil."[9] Brown's moderate stance in the political debate and his willingness to print materials supporting divergent arguments seemingly made his newspaper the perfect tool for Philadelphians to use during the yellow fever epidemic. The editors of The National Gazette and of The Gazette of the United States devoted too much time to (and were too bitterly divided over) the political controversy to conceive of their role as Brown did. The city needed a newspaper willing to be a forum for news about the epidemic. The Federal Gazette, whose motto was "The Public Will Our Guide--The Public Good Our End," filled that need, but in so doing, compromised the impartiality that had originally made the newspaper so well-suited for the job.

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[8] The Federal Gazette, October 25, 1793. Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, the other major moderate newspaper published 29 Federalist polemics and 23 Republican polemics concerning the Impartiality Proclamation from April 1793 until it suspended publication due to the yellow fever September 14, 1793. Brown's quest for objectivity and impartiality demonstrates that editors sought to remain above the partisan fray before the rise of the penny press. Daniel Schiller, Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981) and Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978) argue that impartial newspapers first arose in the era of the penny press. See William Sloan, "The Party Press: The Newspaper Role in National Politics," PhD Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1981, who challenges the notion that this was a "dark era" in American journalism history but does deal with newspapers that strove to be impartial in the rising partisan atmosphere; and Norman Blantz, "Editors and Issues: The Party Press in Philadelphia, 1789-1801" PhD Dissertation, Penn. St., 1974

[9] The Federal Gazette, July 30, 1793.

In 1793 Philadelphia, with the suburbs of Southwark and the Northern Liberties, comprised a geographic region that stretched two miles north and south along the Delaware River. At its widest point, the city was one mile across. Approximately 50,000 people were crammed together only a short walk away from the open air of the country. According to one survey, the average Philadelphia dwelling housed more than six people.[10] Compounding the cramped living conditions, two thousand refugees from the revolution in Santo Domingo landed in Philadelphia in late July 1793 and settled in a compact group between Second and Fourth streets along Front and Walnut streets.[11] Shortly after the arrival of the refugees, a strange illness appeared at Richard Denny's boardinghouse on North Water Street. Several sailors died. After having watched a number of patients die with the same symptoms in the first weeks of August, Benjamin Rush declared that yellow fever had returned to Philadelphia and advised all who could to leave the city.[12]

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[10] Philadelphia Committee to Attend to and Alleviate the Sufferings of the Afflicted with the Malignant Fever, Minutes of the Proceedings, (Philadelphia: R. Aitken and Son, 1794), [hereafter, Committee, Minutes] appendix. Mary Schweitzer, "The Spatial Organization of Federalist Philadelphia, 1790" Journal of Interdisciplinary History 24:1(Summer 1993)31-57, pp. 39-43 notes that the population density at the center of the city would have been 70,000 people for square mile and that the population density around the market was three times higher than the density just three blocks away. For overviews of Philadelphia in this time, see Allen Davis and Mark Haller, eds., The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower Class Life, 1790-1940, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), Richard Miller, Philadelphia--The Federalist City: A Study of Urban Politics, (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1976), and John Cotter, Daniel Roberts, and Michael Parrington, The Buried Past: An Archaeological History of Philadelphia, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania

Rush also identified the cause of the infections: the putrid odor emitted by a shipment of coffee which lay rotting in the humid August air on Ball's Wharf on Water Street--a narrow, damp street filled with stagnant air by the banks of the Delaware River, where Rush's first patients lived. Other explanations

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Press, 1992).

[11] Frances Sergeant Childs, French Refugee Life in the United States, 1790-1800, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), pp. 103-165; Gary Nash, Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 141-143; John Harvey Powell, Bring Out Your Dead: The Great Plague of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1793, originally 1949, (New York: Arno Press, 1970), pp. 1-7.

[12] Rush to Julia Rush, August 25, 1793, Dagobert D. Runes, ed., Selected Writings of Benjamin Rush, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 406. Benjamin Rush, An Account of the Bilious Remitting Yellow Fever, as it Appeared in the City of Philadelphia in the Year 1793, (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1794), pp. 6-12. Rush had been in Philadelphia during the last epidemic in 1763 and recalled the symptoms. Saul Jarcho, "John Mitchell, Benjamin Rush, and the Yellow Fever" Bulletin of the History of Medicine 31:2(March 1957)132-136 questions Rush's use of Dr. Mitchell's notes and cure. Carl Binger, Revolutionary Doctor: Benjamin Rush, 1746-1813, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1966), pp. 203-205.

quickly surfaced: poor sanitation, poor ventilation, lack of rainfall, reduced river current due to docks, the burying of the dead within the city limits.[13] While some blamed local conditions, others blamed the Dominican refugees. Some Philadelphians spread the rumor that blacks had poisoned the water wells.[14] Various religious denominations claimed the epidemic was sent from God to purge the city of its sinful ways. One poet wrote:

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[13] The National Gazette, September 25 and October 16, 1793 See also, "William Penn" in The Gazette of the United States, December 12, 1793. Others argued that the British postal ship, Hankey, transported the yellow fever to Philadelphia from Africa by way of Grenada and Jamaica. College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Additional Facts and Observations Relative to the Nature and Origin of the Pestilential Fever, (Philadelphia: A. Bartram, 1806), pp. 77-84. See also College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Facts and Observations Relative to the Nature and Origin of the Pestilential Fever which prevailed in this city in 1793, 1797, and 1798, (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1798), appendix and John B. Blake, "Yellow Fever in Eighteenth Century America" Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine 44:6(June 1968)673-686. The first responses in the city closely parallel the model offered by Daniel Fox "History of Responses to Epidemic Diseases in the United States," Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine 56(1989):223-229.

[14] The rumor was recorded by Paul Preston, who wrote "consider how much it looks like a Scorge in Vindication of the Cause of the poor Africans so long and inhumanely kept under unnatural Bondage." The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 38:2(1914)236-237. In response to early claims that blacks were immune to the fever (a belief that quickly proved false), Richard Allen, William Gray, and Absalom Jones of the Free African Society volunteered to assist the Committee in any way possible. They and the blacks they hired relieved families with money and supplies, comforted the ill as nurses, bled the ill with Rush's instructions, purchased coffins, and dug graves. They spent 378 pounds sterling, although the Committee only reimbursed them for only 61%. A record of their actions can be found in Jones and Allen, A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, During the Late, Awful Calamity in Philadelphia in the Year 1793: And a Refutation of Some Censures thrown upon them in some late Publications, originally published 1794, as found in Afro-American History Series, Volume 1, (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1972). Jones and Allen wrote their Narrative in response to Mathew Carey's Account in which Carey claimed that blacks overcharged those they cared for and often stole from the dead. Carey, Account, p. 63. See also, Gary Nash, Forging Freedom, pp. 122-124.

> O! may thine arm, Lord, now stretch out/Upon a guilty land
> Make them consider and not doubt/It's thy almighty hand
> And with humility profess/Their sin deserved the rod
> And with unfeigned hearts confess/ Repent, and turn to
> God.[15]

When fatal, yellow fever yields a very painful death. Within a week of infection, the virus attacks the kidneys and the liver, causing fever, headaches, nausea, nose bleeds, jaundice, vomiting, and renal failure.[16] The moans of those dying, the stench of rotting corpses and the terror on the faces of all residents of Philadelphia provoked many citizens to flee the city. One resident wrote that "the dying groans has filled our Ears all night, and the dead has rushed on our Eyes with the returning day--whole families have been swept away."[17] Mathew

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[15] "Reflections caused by the Yellow Fever in the Year 1793" by John Purdon. [John Purdon] A Leisure Hour, or, A Series of Poetical Letters Mostly Written During the Prevalence of the Yellow Fever, (Philadelphia: P. Stewart, 1804).

[16] Walter Reed identified the female Aeded Aegypti mosquito as the carrier of the yellow fever. Philadelphians in 1793 did notice that there were unusual numbers of mosquitoes in the city that year. The Federal Gazette September 2, 1793 contained instructions how to kill "that most troublesome insect" and Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser August 29, 1793 termed them "poisonous insects" and described the multitudes of them. See also Donald Cooper and Kenneth Kiple, "Yellow fever," in Kenneth Kiple, ed., The Cambridge World History of Human Disease (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 100-1107.

[17] Samuel Hodgdon to Isaac Craig, September 21, 1793. The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 14:3(1890)329. Dolley Madison lost her first husband, John Todd, Jr., their son, William Temple Todd, and her in-laws. Paul Sifton, ""What a Dread Prospect...' Dolley Madison's Plague Year" The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 87:2(1962)182-188. Republicans

Carey added:

> Less concern was felt for the loss of a parent, a husband, a wife, or an only child, than, on any other occasions, would have been caused by the death of a servant, or even a favorite dog.[18]

Novelist Charles Brockden Brown, whose character Arthur Mervyn "met not more than a dozen figures; and these were ghost-like, wrapped in cloaks, from behind which they cast upon me glances of wonder and reason" as he wandered the city, wrote that

> the chambers of the diseased were deserted, and the sick left to die of negligence. None could be found to remove the lifeless bodies. Their remains, suffered to decay by piecemeal, filled the air with deadly exhalations and added tenfold to the devastation.[19]

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lost two leaders in the city--Dr. James Hutchinson and Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant. Dumas Malone, Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty, (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1962), p. 142.

[18] Mathew Carey, A Short Account of the Malignant Fever Lately Prevalent in Philadelphia, with a Statement of the Proceedings that took place on the subject in the Different Parts of the United States, fourth edition, originally published 1794, (New York: Arno Press, 1970), p. 23. Demand for Carey's Account so great that he published four editions by January 1794. Powell, Dead, p. 301. In contrast to Carey's assessment, Rush wrote his wife: "you can recollect how much the loss of a single patient once in a month used to affect me. Judge then how I must feel, in hearing every morning of the death of three or four!" Rush to Julia Rush, August 25, 1793, Runes, Writings, p. 406.

[19] Charles Brockden Brown, Arthur Mervyn, or Memoirs of the Year 1793, originally published 1799, (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1889), pp. 130 & 140. For commentary on Brown's work in relation to the epidemic, see Arthur Thomas Robinson, "The Third Horseman of the Apocalypse: A Multi-Disciplinary Social History of the 1793 Yellow Fever Epidemic in Philadelphia," unpublished PhD Dissertation, Washington State University, Department of American Studies, 1993. For other descriptions of the city, see Jacob Cox Parsons, ed., Extracts from the Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer, (Philadelphia: William Fell and Company, 1893), p. 195 and Paul Preston's letter to his son October 18, 1793 in Pennsylvania Magazine, 233. According to the figures of the Committee, 2,728 of 6,327 houses (43%) in the Philadelphia metropolitan area were closed, 11,906 of 34,835 whites (34%) fled, and 290 of 2,036 blacks

While the terrible scenes convinced many Philadelphians that an epidemic had begun, Rush's declaration of yellow fever failed to convince the medical community, just as Freneau's claims that the Washington Administration was demonstrating monarchical tendencies failed to convince the political community. Challenging Rush, some argued that the disease was just a violent case of the fall fevers.[20] Had their recommendations been unified, Philadelphia's doctors might have prevented some of the panic that engulfed the city. In an effort to prevent the spread of the disease and the panic, politicians called for an official investigation. Governor Mifflin wrote to Dr. James Hutchinson, Physician of the Port, asking him and Health Officer Nathaniel Falconer to report on the progress of the disease. Meanwhile, Mayor Clarkson asked the College of Physicians to provide information on the nature of the pestilence and any cures for it-

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(14%) fled. Committee, Minutes, appendix.

[20] Dr. Benjamin Say labeled the disease "typhus gravior." Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 28, 1793. Many used the phrase "the present malignant fever," while some felt the problem was "nothing more than the annual Fall Fevers." Others called it Hospital, Gaol, Camp, or Spotted fever, General Advertiser, August 28, 1793 and Gazette of the United States, September 14, 1793. Whether or not the disease was imported or not was a significant issue to many doctors. See Martin Pernick, "Politics, Parties, and Pestilence: Epidemic Yellow Fever in Philadelphia and the Rise of the First Party System," William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, 29(1972),559-586. Pernick argues that Republican doctors believed that the fever was of domestic origin, while Federalist doctors felt that it was imported. He attempts to relate medical opinion on the fever to the developing rift forming in the national government. He provides substantial proof for the case of Rush, but lacks information about a substantial number of doctors. Additionally, Pernick labels Brown a Republican and admits that many Republican doctors refused to practice the cure that Rush advocated.

-the first time in American history that a government appealed to a medical organization. In response to Clarkson's request, the College of Physicians met on August 25 and released an eleven-point document designed to help Philadelphians deal with the epidemic.[21]

The two most political newspapers in the city dealt with the College's proclamation in very different ways. Fenno included neither the caution to avoid the ill, nor the recommendations to mark the houses and to stop the tolling of the bells for the dead.[22] He thus attempted to quell the belief that the fever was as dangerous as some were arguing. Striving for normality, Fenno suppressed the most radical suggestions, while publishing only those he thought would benefit the city in conjunction with Hamilton's personal physician's letter. Freneau ignored the College's publication altogether. He was more concerned with the political debates (and with defending Genet's actions) than with the onset of the fever: of the nineteen issues that Freneau published between August 24 and October 26, the lead articles of only three concerned yellow fever. Thirteen of the issues opened with either polemics or with news concerning the Impartiality Proclamation or the French Revolution.[23]

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[21] The College's second recommendation, which later proved to be controversial, called for the citizens of Philadelphia to mark all houses that contained a sick person. The College advocated, among other things, ending "the tolling of the bells," called for the establishment of a hospital, and cautioned that the dead should be buried quickly. College, Facts, pp. 5-7. The Federal Gazette, August 27, Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 27, The Pennsylvania Journal, August 28, The General Advertiser, August 28, The Pennsylvania Gazette, August 28, and The Independent Gazetteer, August 31, 1793 all printed the College's eleven points. "Question Veritatis" cautioned against marking houses because the procedure "would give sanction to an opinion of the plague being among us" and questioned whether all members of the College agreed. The Federal Gazette, August 28, 1793. Powell, Dead, pp. 19-31.

[22] The Gazette of the United States, August 28, 1793.

Doctors were not alone in offering cures. Non-doctors competed with doctors in an effort to describe, to treat, and to cure the mysterious illness. They found receptive editors. Many Philadelphians believed that sharing information was the duty of republican citizens. The safety of the nation and of the city might depend upon information exchanges.[24] Their publications demonstrate a willingness to enter into the public sphere--the public debate--and a willingness on behalf of certain public leaders--newspaper editors--to provide citizens a forum to engage in public debate. Viewing themselves as conveyors of useful information, editors often encouraged their readers to submit material that would benefit others. One editor urged:

> ***It behooves every friend to humanity, who may possess the smallest knowledge of any means, whereby the present unhappy malady may be checked, or prevented from spreading, to publish such useful hints as may

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[23] On the day on which Freneau would have most logically published the College's points--August 28--he published Genet's letter to Washington and Jefferson's reply, "A Whig" who defended Genet's conduct, a parody of a newspaper in April 1801 in which the "hereditary council" had taken over, "Hamlet" who urged that the American government "will soon grow worse if we do not watch it," and prices current.

[24] For the importance of information networks in this period, see Richard Brown, Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

have this tendency.[25]

Philadelphians answered these calls and agreed with the philosophy espoused. "W.B." wrote:

> It is a duty incumbent on every citizen to assist, as far as may be in his power, in alleviating the distresses, calming the fears, and removing the prejudices of those whose minds have been deeply affected by the calamitous scene which our city has for some weeks past, exhibited...Claiming, as I do, no professional talents which could enable me to render any services to my fellow citizens, under their present distress, I am nevertheless urged, by what appears to be my duty, to offer to the public some observations.[26]

From August 26 to September 14 Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser included seven different cures for the epidemic that were not signed by doctors. While most of the cures offered anonymously were herbal, other citizens offered a variety of cures from spreading dirt to exploding gunpowder. As cures poured into them, most editors eagerly published them.[27]

John Fenno was an exception. Rather than print suggestions from all citizens, Fenno relied on the authority of Alexander Hamilton, who claimed to have contracted the fever in early

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[25] Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, September 10, 1793.

[26] The General Advertiser, September 18, 1793. See also "Philanthropos" and "L" in Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 24 and September 14, 1793.

[27] See "W.F.," "A.B.," "Subscriber," "A Friend to the People," "Citizen," and "B.D." in Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 26, 28, September 3, 12, 13, 1793; "A Cure for the Flux," The Pennsylvania Gazette, August 21; "A Correspondent," The General Advertiser, September 12-18; "Howard," The National Gazette, September 14; The Pennsylvania Journal, August 28, 1793.

September.[28] According to Fenno

> Mr. Hamilton was taken with the terrible disorder last Thursday night--his attack was extremely violent--a vomiting which continued so long and so forcible as almost to deprive him of life before it could be stopped--He is about 5 miles out of Town; but I have heard from him once or twice every day--this afternoon at about three o'clock I heard that his Symptoms were highly alarming and I shall not be Surprised to hear of his Death by Tomorrow--He caught the disorder by going into a House on business, where there was a person sick with it, which circumstance he was ignorant of.[29]

While travelling to Albany to stay with father-in-law Philip Schuyler, Hamilton wrote to the College of Physicians President Dr. John Redman stating that he and his wife had been cured by

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[28] Rush doubted Hamilton's claim to have the fever. "The disease in this case was either very light, or Mr. Hamilton owes more to the strength of his constitution, and goodness of heaven, than most of the people who recovered from the disorder." Rush, Account, pp. 304-305. Jefferson was harsher: "Hamilton is ill of the fever, as is said. He had two physicians out at his house the night before last. His family think him in danger and he puts himself so by his excessive alarm. He had been miserable several days before from a firm persuasion he should catch it. A man as timid as he is on the water, as timid on horseback, as timid in sickness, would be a phenomenon if his courage of which he has the reputation in military occasions were genuine. His friends, who have not seen him, suspect it is only an autumnal fever he has." Jefferson to James Madison, September 8, 1793. Ford, Writings, v. 6, p. 418. Jefferson, himself, down-played the fever in his correspondence and promised not to leave the city until October 1. Upon witnessing the extent of the epidemic, however, Jefferson left for Monticello on September 17. Malone, Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty, pp. 140-141.

[29] Fenno to Joseph Ward, September 9, 1793; John Fenno Papers, Library of Congress. For another letter on the imminent death of Hamilton, see Tench Coxe to William Barton, September 9, 1793, reel 60, Tench Coxe Papers (Microfilm): "I have heard respecting Mr. H's case, I fear there is little hope of his recovery--In what an awful situation are we placed!--No one knows whether it may be his turn next." I am indebted to Joanne Freeman for these citations.

Dr. Edward Stevens, and the ill should consult him.[30] Fenno printed both Hamilton's and Stevens's letters to Redman.[31] Those letters provoked extensive debate within the medical community as Rush, who was already involved in a dispute with Dr. Adam Kuhn, confronted the Secretary of the Treasury whose political philosophy and proposed cure he despised.[32]

The offering of cures and other opinions by citizens and their printing by editors exemplifies the free exchange of information in a republican society in which Americans like Fenno were reluctant to become engaged, instead opting for the advice of an authority figure (Hamilton's personal physician, no less). Unlike Fenno, most Philadelphia editors were willing to publish anonymous letters advocating cures. These anonymous letters, however, show citizens struggling to discover a cure, while lamenting the fact that their doctors were so divided.

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[30] For the Hamiltons' difficulties with Abraham Yates, Jr., the Republican Mayor of Albany, see Hamilton to Yates, September 26, and Yates to Hamilton, September 27, Syrett, Papers, v. 15, pp. 343-351. The Federal Gazette, September 11 & 16; Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, September 13; The Gazette of the United States, September 18, 1793. For reports of Philadelphians encountering problems in other cities, see The General Advertiser, September 18 & 20; The Federal Gazette September 21 & 24; and The National Gazette, October 2 & 5, 1793.

[31] The Gazette of the United States, September 18, 1793. This issue was Fenno's last before suspending publication. In this same issue, in much smaller type than he normally used, symbolic of his disdain for Rush, Fenno noted that Rush's bleedings had been successful.

[32] Rush's expressed his exacerbation at the debates in his letters to his wife. "Some of my brethren rail at my new remedy, but they have seen little of the disease, and some of them not a single patient." Rush to Julia Rush, September 5, 1793. "Scores are daily sacrificed to bark and wine. My method is too simple for them." B. Rush to J. Rush, September 15, 1793. Runes, Writings, pp. 410-411.

Like those who offered cures, many writers begging doctors to "attempt something in concert for the cure and prevention of this dangerous malady" preferred anonymity.[33] They adopted anonymity to advance arguments into the public sphere so that the importance of their arguments would not be trivialized by those objecting to the name that advanced them. In a republic, anonymity could be symbolic of public virtue. "Araetus, Jun.," for example, hoped it was "not arrogant and assuming for an anonymous writer" to deal with a subject that "had already been treated of at large by characters of the first medical authority."[34] The medical community was far from united, however, as William Currie confessed:

> I should think myself criminal if I was to enter the lists of controversy...The calamitous situation and disconsolate appearance of the city, ought surely to induce all the physicians who have any claim to humanity, to unite with heart and hand.[35]

In an effort to quell debate by supporting a variety of cures,

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[33] Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 24, 1793.

[34] See also "A Friend to the People," Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, September 3 & 11, 1793. For a poignant example of the importance of anonymity, see Benjamin Franklin, The Autobiography and Other Writings, originally published 1793, (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 18. Michael Warner, Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth Century America, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 42 argues that arguments, not persons, mattered in the discourse of the public sphere.

[35] The Federal Gazette, September 21, 1793. Four days earlier, Currie had publicly doubted Rush's yellow fever diagnosis. Currie, a close friend of Rush, later apologized for doubting Rush's purging and bleeding cure, but never publicly acknowledged the contradiction between his two letters.

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Caspar Wistar was "confident that each of them [Drs. Rush and Kuhn] rendered me very essential benefit" when he was ill.[36] Many believed that disagreements among respected doctors over the nature of the illness and over its name caused fear. One anonymous writer argued that

> Many of the fatal effects already produced by the malignant fever now prevailing in this city have been in a great degree, if indeed, not altogether so occasioned by the fears and apprehensions created in the minds of many of the inhabitants, by the alarming reports, spread on all sides (many of them without the least foundation) to the no small amazement of delicate constitutions and timorous minds. Dread and apprehension, serve only to prepare and pre-dispose the body for the impression of any disease...Fear of any thing, though it were but of a mere phantom, or a bare idea of the imagination, weakens the nerves, debilitates the constitution, and depresses the mind.[37]

Another agreed:

> No circumstance has added more distress to the present calamity than the disagreement of the physicians about the disease. They at first differed as to the mode of cure, but now it appears they do not yet agree in determining what is and what is not the yellow fever.[38]

In backing Rush's cure, "W.S." was "sorry to observe so much contradiction in the opinions of our physicians respecting the name, nature, and proper treatment of the fatal disease raging among us," while "Benevolus" was fed up with all disagreements: "For God's sake! For the sake of those who daily wait for the publication of The Federal Gazette, with anxiety! Let your readers be no more pestered with disputes."[39] These writers clearly felt that the public disagreements were having an ill effect on a city divided over political policies and racked by a deadly epidemic. Philadelphians who complained about the fractured society had just lived through a summer in which the nation's politicians, many residing in Philadelphia, seemed to be dividing as well. To many Americans, the divisions in the political community threatened the future of republican government which they did not believe could survive if politicians constructed parties--the death blow to republican government. Concerned about the future of their republic, Philadelphians watched as their doctors divided over medical policy and the leader of one of the political factions entered the lists as a defender of one of the cures. Astute

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[36] The General Advertiser, September 26, 1793.

[37] The Federal Gazette, September 12, 1793. One anonymous writer told Dr. Kuhn to keep "his opinions to himself" as they added to the problems caused by the epidemic, while "A By-Stander" said the same to Drs. Thomas Ruston and George Logan--critics of Rush's policies. The Federal Gazette, September 14, 1793; Dr. Pennington (September 14); Dr. Annan (September 19); Dr. Parke (September 21); Dr. Porter (September 18) all wrote to say that Rush's cure was working and that all should try it. The letters by the doctors were not as blunt as the unsigned letter. Doctors usually reported their findings and then sided with the Rush treatment.

[38] The General Advertiser, September 19, 1793. The National Gazette reprinted this two days later. See also, Robinson, "The Third Horseman," pp. 311-326.

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[39] The Federal Gazette, October 3 & 10, 1793. See also The Independent Gazetteer, September 21, October 19, and November 9, 1793 for complaints about disagreeing doctors. Rush also lamented the "contrariety of opinion among the members of our College upon the remedies proper in this disease." The Federal Gazette, September 13, 1793. Dismayed at the lack of respect shown to him and to his cure, Rush quit the College of Physicians, which he had helped to establish, on November 5, 1793, yet attacks against him continued long after the 1793 epidemic. William Cobbett, alias "Peter Porcupine," fled the country, unable to pay the $8,000 settlement won by Rush in a December 1799 libel suit. See Binger, Rush, pp. 239-247 and Winthrop and Frances Neilson, Verdict for the Doctor: The Case of Benjamin Rush, (New York, 1958).

Philadelphians connected the political debates with the division in the medical community and called on doctors (as they had called on politicians) to end the partisan feuding and establish the proper policy.

In the middle of October, at the height of the fever, Freneau published "A Friend to the People" who argued that

> whenever aristocratic sentiments creep into a republic like ours, it is an unerring [illegible] of that virtue languishes, and of course disease relaxes the body politic--then it is that the political physician should exert every faculty to strengthen its sinews.[40]

Another writer chastised doctors who fled the city: "it is not the day of battle that the _officer_ ought to fly. A physician, if he was certain of falling a sacrifice to the disorder, _ought to remain at his post and learn how to die_."[41]

If physicians were the caretakers of the health of the body, just as politicians were the physicians for the health of the body politic, then dissension among physicians, like dissension among politicians, was very dangerous to the health of both the body and the body politic. "A Citizen" stressed this problem and offered a passionate plea for unity:

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[40] _The National Gazette_, October 19, 1793. Freneau, who made the connections between the ills of the nation and the ills of the city, republished this piece from the _Baltimore Evening Post_. The death toll peaked in October. Mathew Carey, _Account_, pp. 113-162 contains a lengthy list of tables that deal with the dead including a list of those who perished with the fever.

[41] _The National Gazette_, October 26, 1793. The "officer" might refer to Hamilton. The comment about physicians remaining at their posts is interesting in the light that this was Freneau's last issue. Though he promised to reopen with new type on December 2, 1793, Freneau folded his paper due to an increasing debt. See Mary Bowden, _Philip Freneau_, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1976) and Lewis Leary, _That Rascal Freneau: A Study in Literary Failure_, (Rutgers: Rutgers University Press, 1941).

> At this alarming crisis when the eyes of every citizen are naturally turned upon the medical gentlemen for consolation and support, instead of a fellowship and unanimity prevailing among them, we observe opinions diametrically opposite...It would be well if these gentlemen would consider the perturbation, the extreme anxiety, and distress with which those publications have filled the minds of their fellow citizens--this is no time, Sir, for party disputes, prejudices to the old or new method should immediately give way, and that one be unanimously adopted which experience has proved to be the most eligible, and most conducive to the public good.[42]

Citizen appeared in The Federal Gazette the same day as Madison's third Helvidius essay, ten days after Brown published Hamilton's letter in support of Stevens's cure, and almost five months after the Impartiality Proclamation. The Proclamation debate lingered as the epidemic germinated. Due to the yellow fever, the public forum was not the place, Citizen argued, to continue the political debate. As the fabric of the political society rent around them, the citizens of Philadelphia faced their deaths, and considered the possibility of the death of the republic. The debates between polemical writers over the preceding five months concerned threats to the continued republican existence of the United States. Many had called for unity during those debates, but in the fall of 1793, calls by Philadelphians for unity took on entirely different meanings. Republicanism was not at stake: life was.

By entering the debate, Hamilton exacerbated the conflict between Rush and Doctors Kuhn, Isaac Cathrall, and William Currie who, like Stevens, argued that the cure for the illness should be mild. Although he had not yet begun his famous--or infamous--purging and bleeding treatment, even at this early stage in the fever, Rush's system was far harsher than those of Kuhn and Stevens.[43] The medical debate intensified after Rush pronounced that he had the cure for the yellow fever--the purging and bleeding system. Not only did Rush believe that his method would be more successful in curing the ill, he also believed that the system was republican in nature.[44]

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[42] The Federal Gazette, September 20, 1793. The General Advertiser published it the following day. Emphasis added.

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[43] For Rush's discussion of the symptoms of the fever, his beliefs on its cause, and a discussion of how it should have been treated, see Rush, Account, pp. 29-78. For a list of other doctors who disagreed with Rush, see Pernick, "Pestilence," pp. 563-565 and Powell, Dead, pp. 77-78. For another account of the disagreements between doctors see, Robinson, "Third Horseman," pp. 303-337.

[44] The Federal Gazette, September 11, 1793. Rush's directed patients to take a combination of ten grams of calomel and fifteen grams of jalap every six hours to produce four or five large evacuations from the bowels and to lose between eight and ten ounces of blood. In his Account, Rush wrote that "There is less danger to be apprehended from the contagion of the yellow fever in the system than from the poison of the snake, provided the remedies for it are administered within a few hours after it is excited into action." p. 332.

Powell, Dead, pp. ix-x argues that the cures of other doctors helped to save lives, while "Rush unquestionably spent them." Chris Holmes, "Benjamin Rush and the Yellow Fever" Bulletin of the History of Medicine 40:3(May 1966)246-263 argues that Rush's rate of cure was far better than Powell claims. Holmes argues that too few records exist to term Rush's cure lethal and that surviving records give Rush between a 54% and a 78% success rate. John Duffy, The Healers: A History of American Medicine, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 96 writes that "Rush's heroic therapy undoubtedly compounded the suffering and mortality."

Rush argued that the "few" patients that Drs. Kuhn and Stevens had cured "were all slightly affected. They would probably have recovered much sooner" had they not followed the Kuhn-Stevens cure. Rush also noted that he had tried the Kuhn-Stevens method, and it had killed three patients out of four. The Federal Gazette, An ardent opponent of Hamilton's funding system, Rush allowed his republican principles to spill into his medical practices: "it is time to take the cure of pestilential fevers out of the hands of physicians, and to place it in the hands of the people."[45] He sought to teach citizens how to treat the disease because he felt "a greater proportion of sailors who had no physicians, recovered from the fever, than of those who had the best medical assistance."

In these passages on medical practice, Rush's political philosophy is evident. He argued fervently against the belief "that the knowledge of what relates to the health and lives of a whole city, or nation, should be confined to one, and that a small or a privileged order of men." "A new order of things is rising in medicine as well as in government," Rush wrote.

> It is no more necessary, that a patient should be ignorant of the medicine he takes to be cured by it, than that the business of government should be conducted with secrecy in order to ensure obedience to just laws. Much less is it necessary that the means of life should be proscribed in a dead language, or dictated with the solemn pomp of a necromancer.

Rush's commitment to the republican cure was solidified after distributing his directions, as he "observed no difficulty in

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September 12 & 13, 1793. Kuhn's letters can also be found in Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser September 13, 1793 and in The General Advertiser September 11 & 16, 1793. Kuhn contracted the yellow fever and fled to Bethlehem to recover from it. Though his letters ceased appearing in the newspapers after the middle of September, Rush repeatedly dealt with the cure that Kuhn had advocated. Powell, Dead, p. 216.

[45] The following quotes can be found in Rush's Account, pp. 325-333 unless otherwise noted.

[Philadelphians'] apprehending everything that was addressed to them, except what related to the different states of the pulse." For this man, espousing a philosophy that was the essence of the Republican movement in the summer of 1793, Brown altered his previously impartial newspaper.[46]

Until the epidemic, Brown attempted to steer an independent course between the political philosophies of Hamilton and Fenno and those of Jefferson, Madison, and Freneau. Unfortunately for the citizens of Philadelphia, the escalating political crisis was concurrent with a raging epidemic and questions about the health of the city became enmeshed in questions about the health of the political system. Fear fed both problems. One Philadelphian observed "that fear creates a susceptibility in the body to disease--and in law or nervous fevers, a tendency to sink under them."[47] In this crisis, Brown felt that the best way to continue his service to his city was to abandon his impartiality, electing to become a mouthpiece for Benjamin Rush.

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[46] Years later, political opponent John Adams praised Rush for his work on the yellow fever and added "the Plague and the Yellow Fever and all other epidemic Diseases, when they prevail in a City, convert all other Disorders into Plague. I cannot help thinking Democracy is a Distemper of this kind and when it is once set in motion and obtains a Majority it converts every Thing good and bad and indifferent into the dominant epidemic." Adams to Rush, February 6, 1805. Alexander Biddle, ed., Old Family Letters Relating to the Yellow Fever, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1892), series A, p. 62. Adams also maintained that the epidemic saved the nation from violent upheaval by forcing supporters of war to aid France out of Philadelphia. Malone, Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty, pp. 141-142. Rush later complained to Horatio Gates that Federalists had tarred his medical reputation because of his political beliefs. See Pernick, "Politics, Parties, and Pestilence," 575.

[47] Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 27, 1793.

Brown published at least one letter by Rush in five of his six editions between September 12 and 18. In contrast to Brown, Eleazer Oswald of The Independent Gazetteer, despite advocating the bleeding and purging system, published only two letters from Rush between August 31 and December 14. Many more letters followed. "At the expense of an immense load of obloquy," Rush later wrote, "I have addressed my publications to the people. The appeal though hazardous, in the present state of general knowledge in medicine, has succeeded. The citizens of Philadelphia are delivered from their fears."[48] Rush's attempts to address Philadelphians directly would have been much more difficult had no editor such as Brown been willing to publish the immense amount of material that Rush produced. As personal contact became increasingly scarce, and as the percentage of the ill that he and his associates could visit dwindled, Rush inundated the press with his letters. Helping to spread information about his cure, a number of the city's chemists displayed his name prominently in their advertisements. Their quest to profit from Rush's reputation demonstrates the all-encompassing nature of the political arena in the 1790s.

By mid-September, with Rush dominating Brown's newspaper, apothecaries Delany, Goldthwait and Baldwin, and Betton and Harrison added Rush's name to their advertisements which had been published for weeks.[49] The marriage was beneficial to both doctor and chemist, who sought increased sales by invoking Rush's authority, while Rush's cure gained notoriety. Feeling that he had identified the cure and dismayed that public discourse had not fully supported him, Rush allowed the chemists to use the weight that his name carried in an effort to bolster support for his cure. Not content with the plurality of cures being offered to the city, Rush attempted to thwart the open discussion of treatment (and to cure more ill Philadelphians) by allowing his name to be used in such a manner. Brown acted similarly. Although his conception of the importance of the public sphere remained unshaken, Brown was willing to curtail public debate for the sake of unity. In practice, unity meant the suppression of differences of opinion. Brown's devoted his newspaper to Rush even as doctors in the facility operated by the city practiced a different cure.

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[48] Rush believed that "the disease was excited by a sudden paroxism of fear." Rush, Account, p. 309.

Responding to the complaints about the dying and the dead laying at the abandoned grounds of Rickett's Circus, the Guardians of the Poor appropriated the vacant Bush Hill mansion and its grounds as a hospital for the poor as the Pennsylvania

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[49] Brown printed "Dr. Rush's Directions for curing and preventing the YELLOW FEVER" on September 11, 1793. Brown used a considerably larger typesetting for "Dr. Rush's Directions." Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, September 13, 1793. See The Federal Gazette, August 30 & 31, September 3, 4, & 5, Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser August 30, September 2, 5, 7, & 14, and The General Advertiser September 11, 17, & 18, 1793 for other chemist advertisements.

Hospital began turning away yellow fever cases.[50] Conditions there improved dramatically when the Committee members Stephen Girard and Peter Helm volunteered to supervise the operations. They hired Ann Beakly and Mary Saviel as Matrons for three dollars a day each. Michael Leib, Isaac Cathrall, and other doctors visited the mansion daily, each charging the Committee two guineas a visit. Although these doctors practiced Rush's cure, the Committee also accepted the help of Dr. Jean Deveze, a medical officer for the French army in Santo Domingo, who employed a milder cure. Girard, who supported the milder cure, provided Deveze a room at Bush Hill to treat those who did not want to be purged and bled. Insulted, Leib, Cathrall, and the others tendered their resignations on September 21. In less than a week, Girard had reorganized Bush Hill and placed the medical care of the patients under a doctor practicing the cure that Rush was fighting in the newspapers.[51]

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[50] For a representative example of the complaints, see "Medicus" in The Federal Gazette, September 7, 1793. On the founding of Bush Hill, see Charles Lawrence, History of the Philadelphia Almshouses and Hospitals, originally published 1905, (New York: Arno Press, 1977), pp. 39-42, Powell, Dead, pp. 60-65, and John Alexander Render them Submissive: Responses to Poverty in Philadelphia, 1760-1800, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), pp. 130-132.

[51] See Committee, Minutes, pp. 3-29 and Powell, Dead, pp. 160-168 for the purchase of Bush Hill and its early business. See also Harry Emerson Wildes, Lonely Midas: The Story of Stephen Girard, (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1943), pp. 124-127 and John Bach McMaster, The Life and Times of Stephen Girard: Mariner and Merchant, Two Volumes, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Company, 1918), volume 1, pp. 216-222. Committee, Minutes, pp. 135 & 148. For their services, Benjamin Duffield received $500; Deveze, $1,500. For a interesting complaint about Deveze's payment, see The Independent Gazetteer, December 14, 1793. Mary Saville's wages

The citizens of Philadelphia desperately wanted to hear a unified voice and Girard's unification of the care offered at Bush Hill helped to ease the fears of patients taken there. Continued arguments over the nature of the fever and its cures did not benefit citizens. While a free exchange of ideas in the early stages of the disease was beneficial in exposing citizens to a variety of treatments, Philadelphians who believed that the medical community should present a unified cure to the city grew in numbers. Brown responded. He made his newspaper a forum for Rush. Unfortunately, the voice dominating the newspaper debate and the people in charge of Bush Hill seriously disagreed. Though Brown was willing to print advice from anyone during the first weeks of the disease, as fall approached and as the epidemic grew, Brown altered his approach to covering the disease. While he occasionally mentioned that Bush Hill was well-organized and not a place to be feared, Brown never acknowledged that its doctors were adamantly opposed to the cure that Rush was trumpeting. Rather than admit his loyalties, however, Brown disguised his alliance with Rush, relying on rhetoric he might have used during the summer political debates.

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were not supplemented. On the pay of nurses in the era, see Linda Kerber, Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), pp. 58-61. Tavernkeeper, Committee member, and leading Republican Israel Israel lost his election to the Pennsylvania State Senate in December 1793 despite a platform for increased aid to the poor. Miller, Philadelphia--The Federalist City, p. 57. John Alexander, "Poverty, Fear, and Continuity: An Analysis of the Poor in Late Eighteenth Century Philadelphia" in Davis and Haller, eds., Peoples of Philadelphia, pp. 21-22.

Many historians have argued that fear dominated this era.[52] Calls for Americans to be vigilant against encroachments by monarchists and by radical democrats reverberated throughout the public sphere in 1793. Though the source of danger changed, the need for vigilance remained.[53] Consistent appeals for vigilance against a variety of very threatening encroachments--monarchism, anarchy, death--begat panic and paranoia. When the epidemic developed in Philadelphia, citizens who stayed (and those who read Philadelphia newspapers) witnessed debates that seemed very similar to the political debates. The strife over the epidemic did not resemble the political debates solely because Alexander Hamilton became involved in the medical controversies. Philadelphians, like all Americans during the summer months, were debating where authority resided in their society. Benjamin Rush advocated a cure that any citizen could administer. When other doctors and anonymous writers challenged his cure, Rush responded by urging Philadelphians to rely on his name and on his reputation. The debates at which he was the center threatened to rend asunder the city when social relations were already unstable due to the epidemic and the political debates.[54] But the epidemic also threatened to shatter the public sphere by ending public communication.

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[52] Marshall Smelser, "The Federalist Period as an Age of Passion," American Quarterly 10(Winter 1958),4:391-419; "The Jacobin Phrenzy: Federalism and the Menace of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity," The Review of Politics 13(October 1951),4:457-482; "The Jacobin Phrenzy: The Menace of Monarchy, Plutocracy, and Anglophobia, 1789-1798," The Review of Politics 21(January 1959),1:239-258; John Howe, "Republican Thought and the Political Violence of the 1790s," American Quarterly 19(Summer 1967),2:147-165.

[53] Calls for Philadelphians to be "vigilant" repeatedly appeared. See The Federal Gazette, August 30, September 3, 10, 11, 14, 27, 1793; The General Advertiser, September 4, 18, 1793; The National Gazette, September 4, 1793; Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser, August 30, 1793. Rush to Elias Boudinot, September 25, 1793, The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 70:1(1946)102-103.

An impartial participant in the summer political debates, Brown seemed uniquely suited to be the voice of the community during the fall epidemic. Though he printed the debates of the doctors in the early stages of the disorder, Brown realized that the city needed a unified voice. He omitted dissenting voices as the epidemic crested--he never acknowledged that city doctors were still offering two cures. During the height of the fever, Brown opened his columns to the appeals of the Committee for funds, for clothing, and for fire buckets. To lift people's spirits, he recorded all of the contributions from persons and cities and printed reports that the fever was abating. Although mail service was often interrupted, Brown shipped The Federal Gazette to other cities, keeping the network of news information from the nation's capital in tact.[55] By serving as the forum for discussion, Brown's newspaper held the city together in a time when few in the city wanted to see another person, let alone speak with one.

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[54] Isaac Heston to his brother, September 19, 1793: "At this time of general Calamity, when ever[y] one must be roused to a sense of their Dainger, to Continue firm and unshaken is no easy matter...some of the presses are stopt, (your paper has not come in) so that the public mind by every circumstance together, is almost distracted...Poleticks, that run so high lately, are now all laid aside." The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography 86:2(1962)205-206.

[55] In addition to recording the $34,402.07 in donations the city received, Brown also included European news in an effort to distract people's minds from the fever. See Heston letter in earlier note for why these distractions were important to citizens.

Brown fully understood the importance of his publication to maintaining the public sphere. Near the fever's peak he wrote:

> The present crisis is a period of difficulty and distress in this metropolis, but it is obvious that, in the present condition of this city, the means of communicating information, and more especially with regard to the prevailing disorder, is of great importance, and this consideration alone has been the principal inducement with the Proprietor of The Federal Gazette to continue its publication, amidst difficulties which have resulted from the existing calamity...It will therefore be the earnest endeavor of the Conductor of this paper, to communicate to the public, from time to time, the most accurate information he can obtain, relative to the prevailing epidemic.[56]

Nearly one month later, as the fever seemed to be dying out, Brown assessed his work:

> The Editor of The Federal Gazette and Philadelphia General Advertiser has learned, with much pleasure, from various quarters of the union, that the continued publication of this paper, amid scenes of uncommon danger and of daily threatening mortality, has been of great use to the public. It has kept whole the chain of general intelligence that must otherwise have broken; and it has served as a vehicle for conveying information, with respect to the late calamity, at a time when all other Daily Papers in the city had long since discontinued.[57]

Without the regular appearance of The Federal Gazette, and

See also Richard Kielbowicz, News in the Mails: The Press, the Post Office and Public Information, 1700-1860 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989) for information about transporting newspapers through the mail and Powell, Dead, p. 295.

[56] The Federal Gazette, October 1, 1793.

[57] The Federal Gazette, October 26, 1793.

without Brown's conscious effort to change his coverage of the disease, the panic in Philadelphia might have been much greater.[58] In summarizing his importance to the city, however, the editor mentioned neither his devotion to Rush in the medical debates, nor his suppression of the alternative cure offered at Bush Hill. Brown's role in the debates became increasingly one-sided as the fever peaked. Believing that he was serving the city, Brown transformed his newspaper into a forum for Rush's prescriptions about the epidemic and masked the shift away from an impartial newspaper under his role as the guardian of the public sphere.

Like many Americans, newspaper editors were often swept up by the developing partisan alliances. But these editors, also like many Americans, were reared in an anti-party atmosphere. When the gravity of the contested public issues reached maximum importance (anarchy or monarchy and life or death) people raised to believe that parties were inherently evil reluctantly adopted them without being able to admit that they were engaging in partisan behavior. Andrew Brown serves as an excellent example of this conundrum. When the fever abated, Brown stressed the importance of impartial newspapers for republican government:

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[58] Mathew Carey claims 4,041 persons buried in the graveyards of the city and then attempts to list every single person by name. Carey, Account, p. 113-163. Powell, Dead, pp. 301-302 provides some problems with Carey's list and puts the death toll at 5,000. Committee, Minutes, appendix, claims only 3,293 died. In a brief, but comprehensive study of American yellow fever, K. David Patterson, "Yellow Fever Epidemics and Mortality in the United States, 1693-1905" Social Science and Medicine 34:8(April 1992)855-865 agrees with Powell and notes that until 1793, only 2,000 (geographically dispersed from Mobile to New Haven) had died in the American colonies and the United States from the disease. For a more detailed account of previous epidemics, see John Duffy, Epidemics in Colonial America, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1953).

> A NEWSPAPER under the influence of party (for parties will ever exist in free government) often does more harm than good--Partial representations, by mis-leading public opinion, impress a wrong bias upon the judgment, and often disseminate error--Whether right or wrong, every measure of the government is either approved or condemned in toto. How far this tends to warp public opinion, and divide the people, no one conversant in polities can be at a loss to know...The editor of a party paper of extensive spread, may do more mischief that 20 good men can repair...Since, then, newspapers are calculated to form the public opinion; since they are manifestly the vehicles by which the knowledge of political measures is disseminated to the remotest verge of a country; since they may be made the means of much good, as well as rendered subservient to the dirty purposes of intrigue and design; since the public peace, happiness, and safety, any in a considerable degree depend on them, how extremely incumbent is it upon all Printers to observe a rigid impartiality and independence?[59]

In this politically contentious season, the editor of The Federal Gazette sought a moderate course. When he perceived that the questions before the public were of paramount importance to Philadelphians, he faltered from his impartial stance with open debate falling victim to the calls for unity. Like so many other Americans, Brown could not, however, admit that he had succumbed to a partisan position that would soon dominate the political landscape.

The 1793 yellow fever epidemic did not, however, significantly alter the political stance of Brown's newspaper. Due to his desire to stay impartial--and not to be associated with any political movement in the increasingly partisan nation's capital--on January 1, 1794, Brown changed the name of the newspaper to The Philadelphia Gazette. Looking for a respected newspaper in which they could first publish the Jay Treaty, the Washington Administration selected Brown's newspaper. When Benjamin Franklin Bache received a copy of the Treaty from Senator Stevens T. Mason and published it in the Aurora, an immense political debate ensued.[60] As he had done during the impartiality proclamation debates, Brown presented polemics from both Treaty supporters and from those opposed to its ratification. In addition to printing reports of town meetings condemning the Treaty and the Republican polemics, "Curtius," "Cato," and "Decius," Brown printed over thirty of the Hamilton penned "Camillus" essays.[61] When yellow fever returned to Philadelphia in the fall of 1795, Brown remained in the city to print his newspaper. He again printed letters from Rush, but neither the controversy over the treatment nor the epidemic itself were severe, and the vast majority of Brown's columns concerned the Jay Treaty debates.

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[59] The Federal Gazette, October 25, 1793.

Andrew Brown's role in the 1793 yellow fever epidemic in

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[60] James Tagg, Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora, (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 246-263. For overviews of the Jay Treaty and the debates over its ratification, see Jerald Combs, The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970) and Samuel Flagg Bemis, Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932).

[61] The Philadelphia Gazette, July 29, 1795-January 15, 1796

Philadelphia demonstrates the difficulties that Americans--especially newspaper editors--experienced as the nation divided into political parties. Although they hoped to stay impartial, many Americans were unable to do so. Some Americans, like Andrew Brown, were even unable to admit that they had crossed the border into partisanship. These editors must be accounted for when examining the partisan press of the 1790s. Editors occasionally slipped into partisanship over an issue and then retreated into impartiality. Studying these impartial editors yields a different picture of the partisan press in the 1790s--one that is anything but a "dark era."

Constantine Rea: An Antebellum Editor

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Constantine Rea: An Antebellum Editor

Constantine (Con) Rea of Lauderdale County, Mississippi, carved out a colorful life as an antebellum lawyer, politician and civic leader who eventually lost his life as a Confederate Army officer. But perhaps his most significant role was that of a Southern country editor. Rea's contributions to the county he served as a politician and booster are evident in the editorial pages of *The Lauderdale Republican*, one of the earliest newspapers published in east central Mississippi. Through an examination of the life and times of Con Rea, a profile emerges that sheds light on nineteenth century journalism in the antebellum South. This brief overview will touch on the content of Rea's newspaper, *The Lauderdale Republican*, his political activity, problems he shared with other frontier editors, his colorful personality, and his role as a community booster. By examining Rea's role as an antebellum editor, it becomes clear that he shared common traits with other Southern country editors and pioneer editors in other regions. For instance, all overcame harsh conditions in their attempt to give birth to and nourish weeklies under less than ideal conditions.

Rea fits into an image descriptive of other weekly editors of his time that is based on Thomas Clark's work on the Southern press and David Halaas' study of Western editors (1), which includes several common characteristics such as:

* Strong political involvement
* Extensive promotion of communities, including civic/economic causes
* Colorful personality traits, such as fiery tempers and flowery language
* Common problems in printing weeklies in relatively unsettled areas, including paper shortages and inferior equipment
* Highly personalized styles of journalism reflected in both news and editorial content, a characteristic trait of weeklies in the South from 1830 until the Civil War.

Furthermore, Rea, in his role as editor, shared other common bonds with his contemporaries working in other Southern states. These traits were initially described by Rhoda Coleman Ellison in her essay, "Newspaper Publishing in Frontier Alabama." Alabama editors, like later editors in the Far West,

> "...promoted settlement, hoped for political patronage, fought over state printing contracts, faced transportation and communication difficulties, pleaded with advertisers to pay their bills, and engaged in vituperative debates with other editors." (2)

These characteristics, described by Ellison in a 1946 essay, were later associated with editors in other states by historians William H. Lyon, George S. Hage, Porter A. Stratton and Marilyn McAdams Sibley. (3)

While Rea's role as a community leader and eventually as a Confederate officer may not, on its own, justify selecting him for such a profile, the overview does contribute to the general study of journalism history in several ways. Not only does Rea closely fit the emerging image of frontier editors, but the profile could, as Huntzicker suggested, be significant because examining "the lives of ordinary journalists" adds to the body of knowledge on early frontier newspapers and the communities they served. (4)

Microfilm editions of Rea's newspaper, *The Lauderdale Republican*, from 1854 to 1856 provide the main source of evidence of both Rea's life and that of the now-extinct village he served, Old Marion. Incorporated in 1838, Marion was one of the first towns to develop in Lauderdale County, which was organized in 1833. Marion, as the county seat, grew quickly, with merchants, doctors, and lawyers headquartered around the courthouse square. The pace of settlement was frantic, and Rea worked hard to bring some order and civilization to the chaos.

Despite Rea's best efforts to promote the village as an editor, politician and civic leader, Marion eventually disappeared. Ironically, the death of the town was a result of the arrival of the very railroad Rea had vigorously promoted in his editorials -- the Mobile and Ohio -- and the subsequent loss of the town's county seat status to Marion Station several miles to the west. The final act that sealed Marion's doom was yet another cause Rea inadvertently promoted through his actions and editorial comments during the late 1850s -- the Civil War. When General William T. Sherman's troops came through Marion on their Meridian Expedition, the Union forces completed the destruction of Old Marion, which had virtually lost all of its residents to Marion Station.

The Civil War also claimed the life of Rea, who was mortally wounded in July, 1864, as the then acting lieutenant colonel commanded a detail of sharpshooters near the Chattachoochee River in the Atlanta Campaign. Known as Captain Con Rea, the editor had joined the Confederate cause at the outbreak of the war as leader of the Lauderdale Rifles. Before leaving for the Atlanta, Rea was in Vicksburg during the siege in the winter of 1862 through the early summer of 1863, listed as a major in the 46th Regiment. (5) Rea's willingness to drop his editorial pen for a Confederate rifle was not uncommon as a state newspaper estimated that, by June, 1861, "fully two thirds of the newspapermen had enlisted." (6)

While the the death of the Confederacy and the demise of Old Marion seemed a sad end for Rea's life, his glory days as an editor in the booming antebellum village and a politician who served in the Mississippi Legislature did leave a colorful mark in the history of East Mississippi. During Rea's tenure as one of Marion's biggest boosters, the village was in its hey-day as the largest antebellum town in Lauderdale County and a center of business, social and political activity in a predominately rural area. The town was in an essentially isolated area, as this section of east Mississippi was removed from the larger plantation-based centers along the Mississippi River. It would be up to men like Rea to bring culture, literature, and a sense of community to this relatively undeveloped region. He attempted to do just that on several fronts.

A family history and U.S. Census records show Rea was born in 1825 in Tennessee, and married at the age of 18 in Washington County, Alabama, arriving in Lauderdale County between 1846 and 1848. The 1860 Census lists Rea as a 35-year-old Marion attorney, with $12,000 in personal property and $1,000 in real property. (7) Rea, who assumed proprietorship of *The Lauderdale Republican* with partner Charles Wesley Henderson in January 1854, was listed as editor by February 1854.

He replaced C.G. Chandler. Later that year in October, he became the sole owner after Henderson left to devote his time to political pursuits. It was a boom time for newspaper editors in a relatively unsettled Mississippi, with the number of newspapers published in the state increasing nearly 50 percent between 1850 and 1860, with five daily newspapers established by 1860. (8).

Rea's work in *The Republican* shows he fit descriptions offered by Ellison and others such as Clark, who described Southern country editors as "...strong willed, determined, and full of courage of his conviction...an active influence in the social and political affairs of his home community." (9) During the time Rea served as editor, he remained an active lawyer and Democratic leader. Indeed, he was diversified, accepting a leadership role in promoting the civic, business and political causes he deemed important. The attitudes, actions, and commentary found in Rea's editorial statements reflect his political involvement, his support for and promotion of his community, his fiery temper, and his colorful language.

Political news, spiced with economic reports on the cotton market and the railroads, dominated *The Republican* during Rea's editorship. Advertising included both items from local merchants and from Marion's largest trade connection, Mobile, Alabama. The logo of the paper was "The South and the Friends of the South."

Copies of *The Lauderdale Republican* seem to provide the best available information about the editor. As Thomas Clark, author of several studies on the Southern press, pointed out, "Every Southern paper reflected the personality of its editor...Here the editor was the paper." (10) Most of the front page and inside coverage featured news items picked up from other newspapers printed in Mobile, New York, Washington, and other Mississippi towns. This dependence on outside news sources can be seen in Rea's comment on July 4, 1854: "We are under obligations to Dr. Wilson for late Mobile papers. Col. Sanderford also receives our thanks for New York papers." (11)

However, Rea gave equal play to items of local interest in his editorials. For instance, he observed in a May 24, 1854, editorial, "There is a tree growing in this county, on the land of Mr. Charles Hitt, near Alamucha, which measures 37 feet in circumference. It is hollow and the cavity is sufficiently large for a small bedroom. We forgot to inquire whether its acorns grew as large as pumpkins, but suppose they OUGHT to do so from the gigantic size of the tree." (12) He also printed lengthy items written by local correspondents covering topics ranging from agriculture to romance.

He was not immune to the problems associated with handling the influx of local news as he noted on September 26, 1854, "...let writers for the press remember the publisher's prayer: Lord save us from a wordy correspondent." (13)

The editorial page, the primary key to Rea's life and times, contained many items of local interest, along with Rea's personal comments on a wide range of national issues such as slavery. His political inclinations also received heavy emphasis. Generally, Rea's editorials reflected a highly personal journalism typical of the pre-Civil War newspapers in the South.

In the course of his career as an editor, Rea would come face to face with specific problems faced by other editors of the nineteenth century, namely overcoming the obstacles of inadequate printing facilities, difficulties with vital mail service, paper shortages and scrambling to hold onto subscribers. After Rea assumed control of the editorial page, he spelled out some of those difficulties, noting in a February, 1854, editorial that the permanent establishment of a newspaper in Marion had come to be considered "one of the impossibilities." (14) He wrote that rapid changes in the ownership of the paper might explain "...why its support has been limited to eight hundred or a thousand subscribers." (15)

Regardless of the obstacles in his way, Rea vowed to "...establish in the county of Lauderdale a Journal that will not be inferior to any in the South. The facilities we here now have, and are to have, which are necessary for the accomplishments of these designs, are not surpassed by any other in the state." (16) Expounding on his reasons for optimism, Rea suggested that the promised arrival of the Mobile and Ohio railroad tracks from the south would mean improvement of mail services "...to such an extent that we can present our readers weekly, with the latest intelligence, not only from every quarter of the U.S., but also, from beyond the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans." (17) He pledged "...the exertion of our every energy, both mentally and physically" to the survival of the paper. (18)

In the following week's edition, on February 14, 1854, the new editor seemed to be aware of the monumental task he was undertaking as he noted, "We assume the task with diffidence, being well aware of the great responsibilities attending the exercise of that vocation." (19)

Maintaining and increasing the number of subscribers was a primary concern for Rea. In a September 19, 1854, editorial, Rea wrote: "We return our sincere thanks for the seventy-five subscribers, who kindly extended to us their patronage within the last two weeks. We are still continuing to receive subscribers and can now promise our readers that we will enlarge our paper by the first of January next." He noted that *The Republican* required fifteen hundred subscribers to pursue his goal of publishing "...as good a paper as any other in the state." To accomplish his lofty goal, Rea pointed out that he needed to improve the printing facilities and asked his readers to unite "individually and collectively" in the effort to enlist readers. "Our materials," he stated, "are unfortunately old, and our paper has generally, hitherto, exhibited a bad appearance; but we intend to supply our deficiencies by the purchase of new materials and rely upon a generous public for the increase of patronage such an out-lay must demand." (20)

Rea often commented on the problems he encountered with the mail system that delivered the dispatches from other newspapers so vital to his publication. He wrote in a December 15, 1855, editorial, "We frequently get our southern papers from the north, our northern papers from the south, and they pour in upon us from all points of the compass, except the right one..." (21) Similarly, in an earlier editorial, he wrote, "In consequence of mail failure, we have no news from Congress, our readers must bite their fingers and wait with patience, till another mail." (22)

Rea faced another common problem for editors of his time -- paper shortages. In fact, a nationwide shortage forced him to print *The Republican* on a half-sheet in November of 1854. Commenting on the situation, Rea stated he was fortunate to obtain even enough paper for the half-sheet as paper was scarce across the land. He pointed out, "Several of our exchanges have temporarily suspended publication, for the want of paper, others are issued in half-sheets, like ours." (23)

In addition to all of the problems associated with printing and keeping his subscribers, Rea, as a lawyer and political leader, faced other demands on his time. This fact can be seen in his statement on August 29, 1854, that, "Our readers must excuse the briefness of editorial this week. Our Circuit Court coming on, renders it impossible to devote our time, as usual, to our editorial duties. We might offer further apology, but deem it unnecessary knowing that the public is already sufficiently bored by apologies already." (24)

Politically, what can be assertained about Rea's involvement shows he was elected state representative from Lauderdale County in 1855. In 1856, he was a delegate to the state Democratic convention in Jackson and later represented the county at the Democratic National Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1856. Also, a letter from a great-granddaughter of Rea's notes that Rea served in the courts of Lauderdale County as well as in the circuit courts of Kemper, Neshoba, Newton, Jasper and Clarke counties in Mississippi in addition to courts in Sumter and Choctaw counties in Alabama. (25)

One of Rea's goals as an editor was to support his political party, a characteristic found in other pre-Civil War editors. Political considerations were extremely important to the editors who ran weekly newspapers, particulary prior to the War Between the States, with all but three of the seventy-three papers in the state in 1860 classified as political journals. (26) A review of *The Lauderdale Republican* shows Rea's newspaper fit into this pattern. He eventually changed his newspaper's logo from "The South and Friends of the South" to "Union, Democracy and State Soveriegnity." (27)

In outlining his goals for the newspaper, Rea wrote, "The politics of the paper will be purely democratic. We expect to advocate the Jeffersonian doctrine in toto, and forever to give our feeble support for the defence of States Rights doctrine." Rea further pledged that his paper would "...support the Administration of Franklin Pierce, and endeavor to promote the memory of the democratic party throughout the union." (28)

In addition to his own political career. Rea possibly may have been motivated by his desire to land lucrative, politically controlled printing. In an editorial comment on April 8, 1856, Rea complained of lack of patronage for his print shop writing. "No paper can be sustained without the county printing. We have dragged out a precarious existance here for the last two years," as he asked the Democratic party for support. (29)

He expressed his political views in other ways. He constantly attacked members of the Know-Nothing movement, which he described in one editorial as "a secret political association." (30) On September 26, 1854, he told his readers, "Riots occur almost daily in some of the principal cities of the United States. The Know-Nothing Movement seems to have something to do with this order of things." (31)

Perhaps because of his intense involvement and high profile in the community, Rea stood willing to defend his words with a pistol. Ellison suggested that one "...of the conditions of publishing a newspaper seems to have been the courage to meet personal challenges at almost any moment." (32) Furthermore, Hodding Carter pointed out:

> "There is hardly a town of any consequence prior to, during, or after the Civil War in which some editor does not lie buried because of political conviction or political difference. But not all of the issues had to do with politics. Southern editors seemingly killed each other at times for the simple joy of it or to avenge a maligned member of the weaker sex or would shoot it out with fellow townsmen who fancied themselves libeled or whom the editors believed had slandered them." (33)

Certainly, the following account show Rea qualified in this category. According to an eye-witness report of Frank Durr, a former slave whose remembrances of life in Marion from 1836 to 1863 were printed in a 1909 edition of *The Evening Star* of Meridian, Mississippi, Rea participated in a duel in 1857. Durr's account shows that Rea was a fiery editor willing to stand up for his words. In this case, an editorial caused a dispute that ended up on the dueling field. Since the Mississippi Legislature has passed a law that there would be no duels fought in the state, Rea and his opponent went across the state line into Alabama to a place known as Ross's Ridge. Durr's vivid description of the duel is as follows:

> "Mr. Bill Evans and Lawyer Rea were the men engaged. ...Each fired three shots at the word given. I remember the circumstances very distinctly. Mr. Buck Hancock loaded Mr. Bill Evan's gun; Mr. Bill Moody loaded Mr. Rea's gun.....Mr. Rea carried Dr. Knot to wait on him if wounded, while Mr. Evans carried Dr. Ford to wait on him. They made all the people sit down and moved the horses and things out of

> the way; any man that raised a disturbance had it to pay for. Black and white witnessed the fight. They stepped off the sixty yards and laid a plank across the road to show the distance, the men turned their backs toward each other, the count was one, two three then wheel and fire. Mr. Con Rea did not miss Mr. Bill Evans either shot; but did not cut him down. At the third shot Mr. Evans hit Mr. Rea in the knee." (34)

The duel left both participants alive and satisfied as Durr noted, "The duelists made friends that day on the grounds." (35)

Rea's running editorial arguments with rival editors, most particularly Col. A.G. Horne, publisher of *The Quitman Intelligencer* in nearby Clarke County, reflects yet another similarity with other editors of his day. One such dispute prompted him to write in a June 20, 1854, editorial:

> "The *Quitman Intelligencer* has exalted its horns and pitched into our constitutional article, like a billy goat, rampant. As red flannel appears to excite in the greatest degree the ire of this animal, so our remarks on succession, appear to excite the belligerent disposition of the *Intelligencer*. Our friend (Col. Horne) has heretofore taken no notice of our Democratic scribblings, but as soon as the word succession is mentioned, he pitches into us, in manner aforesaid, to the extent of about a column." (36)

Once again, Rea's attack on his rival to the south is a characteristic Ellison found in Alabama's frontier editors. As she pointed out, "Almost every editor had at least one member of the fraternity whom he felt it his weekly duty to chastise in his columns" (37)

Though more tame than his political comments, Rea also used his editorials to promote civic, business, transportation, and social improvements in Marion and Lauderdale County. Once again, he fits an image of other antebellum editors who often avidly promoted their respective communities. For instance, he was clearly boosting his village when he wrote in a May 16, 1854, editorial, "Never since its first settlement has Marion presented a more flourishing condition than it does at the time. Several new buildings are being put up, and others intended to commence shortly." He continued, "...as a spirit of enterprise seems to be pervading our village, we see no reason why it will not, in a short time, be one of the most important towns in East Mississippi." (38)

The economy of Marion was a constant subject of Rea's enthusiasm. In a February 21, 1854, edition of *The Lauderdale Republican*, for example, Rea wrote, "The spirit of improvement of late manifest by our citizens, has created a considerable demand for brick,...A good brick maker would find business profitable in the vicinity of Marion." (39)

Rea constantly urged the development of schools and other institutions in his editorial columns. For example, he asked in a June 6, 1854, editorial, "Why is it that we are without a sufficient jail? Is it because it is better to keep our prisoners at Decatur, than at Marion? Will the Board of Police (the county's governing body) answer?" (40)

One of the projects Rea tackled in his newspaper was promoting the arrival and benefits of the Mobile and Ohio railroad tracks. Ellison suggested that antebellum editors may have vigorously supported railroads because of the troublesome delays in mail service and steamboat delivery of vital Eastern newspapers. (41) For whatever reason, Rea was one of the county's most vocal proponents of the railroads. On May 2, 1854, for instance, he wrote of the coming of the tracks saying, "In a short time the great enterprise will be completed -- the Iron Horse will appear among us to the great astonishment of old Fogies -- marking a new era in the history of East Mississippi." (42) Rea's news selections also reflected his support for the railroads as he often chose to reprint such items as a *Mobile Evening News* story headlined "Two Steamboats Burned." In contrast, *The Republican* featured glowing reports on the progress the "Iron Horse" promised. In one editorial, Rea wrote that he was looking forward to the day "...when we can reach the city of Mobile by railroad, and be no longer skinned by swindling steamboats." (43)

Indeed, as Rea predicted, the arrival of the Mobile and Ohio tracks did mark "a new era in East Mississippi." But, ironically, the change meant death instead of prosperity for Marion. When the tracks bypassed the town, residents and businesses began to shift westward, and the town eventually even lost its status as county seat to Marion Station. It was a death like other antebellum editors in Mississippi witnessed, despite their best efforts to promote their communities.

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Forces such as a shift closer to railroad tracks and the move of county seats for political or other reasons, often meant extinction for such towns as Marion. Rea had initially scoffed at the idea of Marion Station taking over Marion's status, writing of the station, "Some are already predicting that the Court House will be removed thither -- and that the glory of our little town will soon forever set, and that everything will pass over to Marion Depot: GOOD GRACIOUS!" (44) Eventually, Rea would resort to such tactics as cautioning Marion residents not to remove to the tracks because of yellow fever or equally dreadful consequences.

It seems clear that Rea was similar to other 19th Century editors who worked in young towns born on the ever-expanding frontiers of that century. Many played vital roles in maintaining and promoting their respective communities, whether in the Old Southwest or later in the new lands opened for settlement beyond the Mississippi River. Rea and other such weekly editors were clearly different from their eastern contemporaries who worked in more stable environments. Despite the hardships, Rea's newspaper surely had an impact, particularly in view of the fact that "...the average country paper in Mississippi wielded more influence within its community per copy distributed than anywhere else because there was less competition from the outside daily papers and periodicals." (45)

Yet Rea's whole-hearted efforts to build and improve Marion through his editorial observations did fail to protect the town from the winds of change. As no editions of *The Lauderdale Republican* past the end of 1856 are available, it is assumed that the newspaper died along with Marion. Certainly, the death of Marion and the disruption of the Civil War in the early 1860s must have been a hard blow for country editor Rea, as it clearly marked the end of one era and the beginning of another. Rea died in 1864, the same year Marion's courthouse was removed to Marion Station.

While no visible signs of Old Marion survive today, Rea did leave a lasting reminder of his legacy as he, like other Southern country editors, recorded the events of the antebellum-era activity. Both Rea and his contemporaries left some of the sole survivors on now-extinct villages and towns in their printed words. His efforts as a newspaper editor clearly spurred growth and improvements in Lauderdale County.

Furthermore, Rea displayed many of the characteristics described by Ellison, who concluded that antebellum editors were "...public spirited men, leaders in their communities. They bought and sold the public lands, promoted the settlement of the villages, framed and interpreted the backwoods laws, saved the pioneers' souls, and taught their children." (46)

This look at the role of Con Rea as a Southern weekly editor provides insights on the tasks faced by editors in the rough-and-ready days of the settlement and development of many nineteenth century towns and villages. It also shows Rea was a politically involved community booster who faced typical problems in producing his weekly chronicle. With this examination of Rea's work, more evidence can be added to the existing works focusing on the antebellum press. Clearly, certain aspects of his career fit an emerging profile of nineteenth century editors now under study by journalism historians. The examination of Con Rea's life and times may also point to new directions for study, such as examining what role antebellum newspaper editors played in the growth and survival of villages and towns in the Old South.

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THE RISE OF THE FACT AND "NAIVE EMPIRICISM" IN JOURNALISM AND THE SCIENCES, AS SEEN IN THE GREAT CHOLERA EPIDEMICS OF 1832, 1849 AND 1866

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BY

DAVID T. Z. MINDICH

Abstract: This paper takes a sweeping look at changes in mid-nineteenth century thought, particularly in medicine and the sciences, and compares these changes with advances in journalism. During this period, editors promised their readers, in the words of Charles Dana, a "daily photograph of the world's events" and the wire services began to market news "devoid of opinion." Running contemporaneously alongside the journalists' increasing use of "objective" notions such as "detachment" and assertions of factuality, was a growing reliance in the social sciences on these same qualities. The rise of "naive empiricism" meant that professionals believed that their world was both knowable and namable, a view that seems to have contributed to the journalists' claim of "objectivity." During this period, public health workers moved from a speculative and religion-based profession to one which justified its claims with scientific studies and data-analysis. In The Cholera Years, Charles Rosenberg outlines the response to the cholera epidemics of 1832, 1849, and 1866. The medical response to the epidemic evolved from the horrific "cures" of 1832, including mercury poisoning and tobacco smoke enemas, to an efficient response in the 1866 epidemic. By 1866, according to Rosenberg, "statistics were becoming the reality of science." The journalists' increasing reliance on "facts" during the ante-bellum period rose in tandem with the rise of statistical analysis and data gathering in the sciences.

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THE RISE OF THE FACT AND "NAIVE EMPIRICISM" IN JOURNALISM AND THE SCIENCES, AS SEEN IN THE GREAT CHOLERA EPIDEMICS OF 1832, 1849 AND 1866

From the 1830s to the years directly after the Civil War, the United States had changed into something almost unrecognizable to witnesses. Medicine, art, literature, the social sciences and journalism had shifted during this period from a paradigm of religion and philosophy to one of science. "The world has grown tired of preachers and sermons," wrote one late-nineteenth century observer. "to-day it asks for facts." Another, the scientist and philosopher, Herbert Spencer, wrote, "objective facts are ever impressing themselves upon us."[1] An example of the new "scientific" way of thinking was the evolving medical response to three New York City cholera epidemics in 1832, 1849 and 1866: the response in 1832 and 1849 was based on superstition, religious beliefs, and random experimentation; by 1866, doctors relied on data gathering and scientific method to combat the disease. These changes in medicine have been well documented. What have not been examined are the *journalistic* response to the epidemics and the relationship between science and journalism during this period. These are the goals of this paper.

While the inverted pyramid form did not emerge as a standard of journalistic news writing until the 1880s and 1890s,[2] "objectivity" had taken a giant step toward its modern form with journalists' growing reverence for "facts" and what Michael Schudson calls "naive empiricism," the growing belief that the world was knowable and namable. The United States, from the early years of penny press in the 1830s and 1840s to the end of the Civil War, had seen massive changes in journalistic practice, which paralleled advances in other areas as well. First, this paper will discuss the medical and journalistic response to the 1832 and 1849 cholera epidemics. Then it will outline the abundant changes in American society and culture as a whole, and finally it will return to cholera and show how the medical and journalistic responses to the 1866 epidemic reflect a new way of thinking, a new scientific approach shared by the medical and journalistic communities. While the medical response to the cholera epidemics has been discussed at length in historical literature, notably in The Cholera Years, by Charles Rosenberg, the link between cholera and journalism has never been explored.

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[1] David Shi, Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, 1850-1920 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 69.

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Ante-bellum Cholera, Ante-bellum Journalism

Cholera's first American appearance was on the dirty, pungent, impoverished streets of New York City. That was 1832. The first successful explosion of the penny press was also on these same streets, just about a year later. While meaningless historical coincidences abound (Lincoln and Kennedy were elected in '60 and were both killed), the confluence of cholera and journalism, from the New York City birth through the 1860s, was no coincidence. The spread of cholera across the United States, by rail, wagon, and steamer, paralleled the spread of news, by the same means. Cholera thrived in cities, where the disease, which is transmitted by human excreta, made the rounds from house to house. The penny papers also found a haven in the cities, where news, too, could be spread and consumed easily from door to door. By the 1860s, the medical profession, using scientific method, data gathering, and technology, defeated cholera on the streets of New York City. And it was technology and science that propelled the newspaper business toward its long-standing goal of journalistic "objectivity."

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Cholera first came to New York in July, 1832. Before it had abated in late August, more than 2200 deaths had been reported, which means that more than one percent of New York's inhabitants had been killed in less than two months. This figure is conservative, considering that in 1832, many of the deaths went unreported; bodies were often hastily buried, or half buried, the stench and the clouds of flies over St. Patrick's cemetery being a reminder of the city's inefficient response to the disease.[3]

The central belief of the medical profession, duly reported in the newspapers, was that the disease sprung from atmospheric conditions, rather than contagion. This was based on a "philosophical," not an empirical view of the disease. According to Rosenberg, "'empiric' was--as it had been for generations-- a synonym for quack." One doctor, for example, upon seeing a cluster of cholera cases, felt that only contagion could explain the outbreak, but because he could not reject other causes, he felt that it was "unphilosophical" to accept the possibility of contagion.[4]

The newspaper coverage of the 1832 outbreak reflected the view that atmosphere played the biggest role, but also reflected a disregard for scientific method and what we recognize as logic. James Watson Webb's Courier and Enquirer used up much of its ink in trying to calm readers' fears (often addressing merchants who might be scared to travel to New York) by discussing the atmosphere. Before the extent of the cholera epidemic was apparent, the Courier and Enquirer announced that the city would be spared. "The purity of the atmosphere-- the beauty of the weather for several days past was never surpassed," explained Webb in an editorial.[5] Less than three weeks later, however, the paper took solace in a seemingly contradictory sign: "A very severe thunder storm passed over the city yesterday morning, which will, we hope, have the effect of purifying the atmosphere."[6]

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[3] Morning Courier and New-York Enquirer (hereafter referred to as the Courier and Enquirer) 30 August, 1832. Charles Rosenberg, The Cholera Years: The United States in 1832, 1849, and 1866 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 90. In his Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney. Written By Himself (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1876), Finney, the evangelist, writes of seeing five hearses pull up at once, to five different doors on his street (p. 320).

[4] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 79.

[5] Courier and Enquirer, 7 July 1832.

[6] Courier and Enquirer, 25 July 1832.

While the possibility of contagion was not accepted in the Courier and Enquirer, atmosphere was not the only cause discussed. After all, panicked New Yorkers wanted guidance avoiding the disease. The pages of the Courier and Enquirer were filled with preventative advice. One doctor who had suffered from cholera himself, and with an unfortunate name, De Kay, wrote to the paper to warn of "excess in diet, exposure to night air; fear, anxiety, &c."[7] Other reports warned against cold feet ("Keep on your flannels"!), fruits, and vegetables.[8] Cucumbers were constantly cited as culprits ("take care of *cucumbers*"), leading one skeptical doctor to call cucumbers "the 'mad dog' of all our fruits...none is more abused, more slandered."[9]

Perhaps even more than Courier and Enquirer realized, its ideas of cause and cure were wrapped up in its religious notions of morality and its view of the sizable destitute population of New York. "Drunkeness [sic], intemperance, dissipation and all their attendent [sic] evils," wrote the Courier and Enquirer, "are so many inducements for cholera attacks....Be temperate."[10] The newspaper's point of reference seemed to be not science, but biblical notions of plague. A lead story sounds almost like a line from Exodus: "This pestilence, which walketh in darkness, continues its ravages among us, and is daily sacrificing hundreds of victims to its unmitigated fury."[11]

If God was at the bottom of the cholera epidemic, and God is just, the syllogism goes, His victims must be culpable. The authorities proposed a day of "fasting and humiliation," which the Courier and Enquirer's editorials heartily endorsed. The victims, according the medical records and newspaper accounts, were subject to a medical response characterized by violence. One doctor, the president of the New York State Medical Society, recommended an anal plug of beeswax or oilcloth to combat the diarrhea. Some used "tobacco smoke enemas," while others rubbed mercury into the patients' gums.[12] The Courier and Enquirer printed a series of cures, including one which advocated the immediate application "to the epigastric region 20 or 40 leeches according to the severity of the case."[13] "The means used for my recovery," wrote Charles Finney in remembering his own experience with cholera, "gave my system a terrible shock, from which it took me long to recover."[14]

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[7] Courier and Enquirer, 18 June 1832.

[8] Courier and Enquirer, 16 June 1832.

[9] Courier and Enquirer, 27 June 1832.

[10] Courier and Enquirer, 26 June 1832.

[11] Courier and Enquirer, 25 July 1832.

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The city's next great cholera epidemic was in the summer of 1849, when the disease claimed more than four thousand New Yorkers. The 1849 epidemic stood between those of 1832 and 1866, both temporally and in terms of the relative sophistication of the response, as an investigation of the New York Herald during the epidemic reveals.[15]

From 1832 to 1849, many of the particulars remained the same, including many of the ideas of cause and the level of violence in the cures. Rosenberg found that the "atmosphere" was still the big culprit in 1849, and the Herald bears this out. "The return of electricity to the atmosphere," Bennett suggested in his paper, "has had on the whole, a favorable tendency."[16] Cases were still attributed to a plethora of preconditions, from drunkenness, to national background, filth, fruits, exposure to the sun, and "offensive effluvia" from soap factories.[17] The biblical tone of 1832 was also present in 1849, with Bennett thanking "Providence" for a relatively innocuous mortality report.[18] Also remaining from 1832 were the contradictions found in the newspaper columns. One week after cautioning readers about the relationship between cholera and alcohol, the Herald praised a cure of "laudanum... camphor... cayenne pepper.... ginger.... peppermint....put into a quart of French brandy."[19] Still, in 1849, medicine shared with newspapers an inability to understand the cause, prevention, or cure of cholera; the news was still operating without the necessary facts it needed to make decisions and to help its readers make decisions.

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[12] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, pp. 60-67.

[13] Courier and Enquirer, 21 June 1832.

[14] Charles G. Finney, Memoirs, p. 320.

[15] I read each issue of the New York Herald from the summer of 1849.

[16] Herald, 23 July 1849.

[17] Herald, 5, 10, 1, 15, and 17 July 1849.

Although it came too late to help the victims of the 1849 epidemic, the medical response to cholera was developing in Europe. One London anesthetist, Dr. John Snow, had, in fact, discovered the cause of the disease and published his findings in a British journal in 1849. Snow's theory was that cholera was spread through water contaminated by infected excreta. In 1849, Snow's theory was just one among many. What separated him from the rest was that in 1854, when a cholera epidemic hit London, he was able to prove his theory. London, in 1854, was served by two water companies, one which drew its water from the upper Thames river, and one which received its water from the lower Thames, south of where London dumped its sewage. Through massive data gathering and analysis, the type of "empirical" research so suspect in 1832, Snow was able to discover and prove that the customers from the latter water company were at a much greater risk than the customers of the former.[20]

The 1849 epidemic marked a paradoxical time in medical history. On the one hand, as Snow's research suggests and Rosenberg states, "statistics were becoming the reality of science." On the other hand, as Rosenberg argues, data gathering and scientific analysis were starting to be practiced in Europe while they were still woefully inadequate in the United States. Still, in 1849, U.S. doctors and journalists had no notion of how cholera was transmitted. And as in 1832, the

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[18] Herald, 1 July 1849.

[19] Herald, 15 July 1849.

[20] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, pp. 193-194.

New York doctors did little but harm, with some of their more creative cures ranging from tobacco smoke enemas to electric shocks and immersion in ice water.[21]

While U.S. doctors and journalists were no closer in 1849 to understanding the disease or finding a cure, an inchoate yet palpable respect for data and scientific inquiry is apparent in the pages of the Herald. It is no surprise that Bennett's Herald was highly critical of the medical profession (his *modus operandi* was unrelenting attack of everyone and anyone), but it is interesting that the focus of his criticism reflects a concern for empiricism and science. The Herald angrily presented evidence that not "a single...physician or student of medicine had made his appearance at any of the cholera hospitals for the purpose of observing and investigating the disease," and criticized the doctors' "dislike of anything like attentive study of the disease."[22] Columns of statistics, with lists of everything from mortality rates to national origin and age of victims to a comparison of the 1832 and 1849 epidemics appeared regularly in the newspaper. There were even charts analyzing the correlation between the virulence of the disease and the average outdoor temperature, from which the Herald concluded that the statistics did not support a causal relationship.[23] This attempt to conduct scientific inquiry also reflected the paper's impatience with doctors for not finding a cure and for their indelicate experimentation: "The cholera is a most terrible infliction; but bad doctors and bad drugs are worse," announced one editorial.[24]

A Changed World, 1849-1866

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[21] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 152-3. The homeopathic doctors were an exception to this, for while their cures did little good, they were not nearly as a dangerous as the standard medical cures (161).

[22] Herald, 27 July, 8 August 1849.

[23] Herald, 21 August 1849.

[24] Herald, 12 August 1849

The mortality rate had not changed significantly from the 1832 cholera to that of 1849. But in 1866, the medical response was able to cut the rate by 90%.[25] Paralleling this shift were fundamental changes in the way journalists practiced their craft. What happened in the seventeen years between 1849 and 1866? Everything. Mitchell Stephens looked at the ante-bellum era and cited the "haze" that covered the world. In many areas--medicine, art, photography, fiction, social science, and journalistic communication, to name a few-- fundamental shifts were occurring, allowing news producers and consumers a different, and often better, vision of the world. In many ways, the "haze" was lifted in the seventeen years between 1849 and 1866.[26]

The "haze" was certainly lifting for most New Yorkers during the middle of the nineteenth century. Simple innovations such as gaslight had profound consequences for people, extending days and allowing the consumption of ever more knowledge.[27] The extension of New York City north of fourteenth street facilitated another innovation, public transportation. For the first time in human history, writes Michael Schudson, ordinary citizens could ride daily in vehicles driven by someone else. Without having to keep their eyes on the road, they could read a newspaper or a book.[28] Meanwhile, during this time, the Herald, Times, and Tribune went from four pages to eight, everyday, and increasingly, contained timely news from around the nation and Europe. Circulation boomed. Running concurrent to this rise in information consumption was a rise in literacy, which reached 94% in the free states by 1860, and in school enrollment, which went from less than 50% of children in 1850 to 72% in 1860.[29] And if people seemed more sober and clear-headed at the close of this period, it was probably because they were; liquor consumption fell markedly after 1830.[30]

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[25] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 209.

[26] Mitchell Stephens, A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite (New York: Viking, 1988), pp. 217-266.

[27] Jack Larkin, The Reshaping of Everyday Life: 1790-1840 (New York: Perennial Library, 1988), pp. 142-143.

[28] Michael Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York: Basic Books, 1978), p. 103.

People during this period could be increasingly confident about their doctors and the scientific and medical professions in general. The two greatest innovations of nineteenth century surgery were born in this time-- anesthesia and antiseptics. Before 1846, when ether was discovered as an anesthetic in surgery, one leading hospital reported fewer than 40 operations a year. After the Civil War, more than 700 operations were performed annually.[31] During this time antiseptics and aseptics were developed, greatly reducing the risk of infection; by the 1870s they were becoming widely available.[32] Finally, the Civil War itself, the first war for which data were carefully kept and the first war to use general anesthesia on a grand scale, produced many medical (particularly surgical) innovations and practitioners.[33] In the thirty years after 1849, the number of medical schools in the U.S. doubled.[34]

Medical patients of the postwar era were also more fortunate than ante-bellum patients in that many of the improvements of the 1860s were built upon the excesses of the 40s and 50s. One of leading gynecological surgeons of the nineteenth century, J. Marion Sims, gained his expertise by reckless experimentation on slaves in the south and on poor Irish women in the north, with some unfortunate patients undergoing as many as thirty operations. By the end of the War, Sims had perfected a number of surgical techniques and had become a respected surgeon, heading the American Medical Association for a time and making a fortune from his many paying patients.[35]

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[29] McPherson, Ordeal by fire : the Civil War and Reconstruction (New York : Knopf, 1982), p. 24; Charles Sellers, The Market Revolution : Jacksonian America, 1815-1846 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 369.

[30] Sellers, Market Revolution, p. 260.

[31] Ira Rutkow, Surgery: An Illustrated History (St. Louis: Mosby-Year Book Inc., 1993), pp. 321-335. The hospital was Massachusetts General.

[32] Rutkow, Surgery, pp. 342-344. Rosenberg, in The Cholera Years (p. 199), explains how Pasteur and his germ theory was starting to reach the U. S. in the years after the Civil War.

[33] Rutkow, Surgery, pp. 445-448.

[34] Bruce Kimball, The "True" Professional Ideal in America: A History (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992), p. 249.

Religion

Religion was a filter through which the cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849 were seen, but this filter was being replaced in the minds of many. According to one historian, Bruce Kimball, religion had led the professions until about the end of the eighteenth century. At this point, writes Kimball, the influence of religion was replaced by a growing reverence for law, and then for science, medicine, and empiricism.[36] The shift included a sense that the world was knowable and namable, ("naive empiricism") if only we roll up our sleeves and investigate it. The penny newspapers saw themselves as a part of this shift. "Books have had their day," screamed Bennett's Herald, "the temple of religion has had its day. A newspaper can be made to take the lead of all these in the great movements of human thought."[37]

Newspapers played a role in the secularizing of America. Increasingly, the Sabbath was defiled by newspaper extras (one of the earliest examples was the Courier and Enquirer's special cholera edition of 1832[38]) until, by the Civil War, many major newspapers were printed seven days a week. And the Sunday reading was generally not religious in nature. The content of newspapers was becoming, as we shall see, more and more secular and "factual." All the penny papers read in this study asserted their own nonpartisanship, factuality, and accuracy, while few routinely asserted specific religious beliefs. Newspapers such as the National Police Gazette prospered and grew during the second half of the nineteenth century, in large measure because of their hard-nosed, factual approach to crime and other secular topics.[39] A tangible reminder that the secular, in the form of the newspaper business, was replacing the religious, came in the form of the great newspaper buildings that came to dominate New York in the early ante-bellum years. Before the war, New York's skyline was dominated by church spires. The white marble Herald building was completed in 1868 and was grander and more imposing than most churches. A huge Tribune building reached 260 feet above City Hall in 1875, the tallest building in the city.[40] The aspirations of newspaper business, aided by the secular science of modern architecture, were now towering above the spires of God.

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[35] Sellers, The Market Revolution, pp. 256-7; Rutkow, Surgery, p. 473.

[36] Kimball, The "True" Professional Ideal, pp. 10, 211, 301.

[37] Williard Bleyer, Main Currents in the History of American Journalism (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), p. 191.

[38] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 22.

Americans at mid-century were a part of a society that was finding God increasingly less relevant to its thinking, and were purchasing "reality" at ever increasing pace. The "dynamo," wrote Henry Adams at the turn of the century, had replaced the "Virgin" as the central metaphor for power.[41] The taste of Americans, from every level of society, was bending toward the real, in areas as diverse as photography, art, literature, the social sciences, and philosophy.

Photography, Art, Literature, and Reality

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[39] Daniel Schiller, Objectivity and the News: The Public and the Rise of Commercial Journalism (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), pp. 99-104.

[40] For the Herald Building, see Oliver Carlson, The Man Who Man News: James Gordon Bennett (New York: Duell, Sloan And Pearce, 1942), p. 380. For the Tribune building, see Richard Kluger, The Paper: The Life and Death of the New York *HeraldTribune* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p.135. The spire of Trinity Church in lower Manhattan was still slightly taller than the top of the Tribune building. Even to this day, the city bears the names of the newspaper giants: Herald Square, Greeley Square, Times Square.

[41] Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams (Ernest Samuels, Ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), pp. 379-390, esp. p. 380. Adams, writing in the third person, recalls visiting the Great Exposition of 1900 in Paris, where he stood before huge steam and electric engines: "to Adams the dynamo became a symbol of infinity. As he grew accustomed to the great gallery of machines, he began to feel the forty-foot dynamos as a moral force, much as the early Christians felt the Cross. The planet itself seemed less impressive, in its old-fashioned deliberate, annual or daily revolution, than this huge wheel, revolving within arm's length at some vertiginous speed....Before the end, one began to pray to it." (380)

The middle of the nineteenth century saw the birth of "realism" as an artistic form. In 1839, Louis Daguerre discovered a way for images to be stored on metal plates. By 1850, Americans were spending as much as $12 million a year on photographs; indeed it was difficult to find a family of means who had not sat for portraits.[42] The public by this time were increasingly interested in the "true" representation of life, and photographs were quickly replacing painted portraits as the preferred method of capturing reality. If photography helped to bring an appreciation of "reality" to the United States, this was never more true than the photographic exhibitions of the Civil War, which, according to the New York Times, "brought bodies and laid them in our door yards and along streets."[43] Newspapers, laying claim to photographic realism, offered a "daily daguerreotype" and promised to be the "historical photographer of national acts."[44]

The art of the post Civil War period also asserted its claim to be "real." "Art...is now seeking to get nearer [to] the reality" wrote one New York artist.[45] Many of the post-war artists, like their confreres in literature, felt less comfortable with sentimental topics in the wake of the staggering carnage and reality of Civil War. "Reality" began to replace sentimental themes. In the 1870s, the trompe l'oeil or illusionist painters began to create art that might be mistaken for real. The most successful artist of this genre, William H. Harnett, painted many works that deceived the public (some wide-eyed viewers would touch the canvas just to make sure)[46] including works that depicted palpable and "real" objects such as pipes, matches and...newspapers.

The term "realism" is often used to describe era born during and after the Civil War. As often as not, "realism" is used specifically as a label of the literature of the age. David Shi, in his book, Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture, traces much of the post war realism to Walt Whitman, whose poems celebrated the everyday reality of American life.[47] Whitman's poetic celebration of the real began in his 1855 edition of Leaves of Grass, in which he basically invents what we now call free verse. Whitman's poetry is the opposite of the anti-empirical stance of the 1832 papers: Whitman's time is spent watching and interpreting what he sees. You shall no longer take things at second or third hand," Whitman promises, but through your own eyes. And Whitman's eyes ranged across nineteenth century America, never looking away from "opium eaters, prostitutes, presidents," or "patriarchs."[48] If his purview resembled that of a snoopy reporter, it may be because Whitman was trained as a reporter, and then editor of the Brooklyn Eagle. "The true poem is the daily paper," wrote Whitman.[49]

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[42] Schiller, Objectivity and the News, pp. 90-91.

[43] New York Times, 20 October 1862.

[44] Schiller, Objectivity and the News, p. 88.

[45] Shi, Facing Facts, p. 128.

[46] Shi, Facing Facts, p. 129.

Whitman was not the only literary realist to begin as a journalist; in fact, most realists began in news rooms. William Dean Howells, perhaps the writer and editor most associated with realism, started in a news room and called journalism "the school of reality." Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, and Stephen Crane also began as journalists.[50] David Shi makes the argument that the literature of realism can be traced in part to advertisers' claims that their products are real: "In a relentlessly commercial environment increasingly detached from spiritual priorities and the integrity of local markets," Shi writes, "people craved the moorings of both product credibility and artistic veracity."[51] The claims of advertisers were best supported by a seemingly objective news product, so here too we see a connection between the literature of "realism" and the journalism of "objectivity."

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[47] Shi Facing Facts, pp. 29-33.

[48] Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," 2nd chant. From Leaves of Grass (New York: Penguin, 1986), p. 26.

[49] Shi Facing Facts, p. 30.

[50] Shi Facing Facts, p. 95.

[51] Shi, Facing Facts, p. 95.

Darwin, Marx and Spencer; the Social Sciences

During the middle of the nineteenth century, a new secular, empirical, and scientific world view was replacing religion and non-empirical philosophy in many areas of intellectual life. Darwin's The Origin of Species was published during this time (1859), one of the most forceful arguments for a scientific world view at the expense of religion to creep into popular consciousness. "When on board H. M. S. 'Beagle,' as naturalist," Darwin began in his introduction to The Origin of Species, "I was much struck with certain facts.... These facts...seemed to throw some light on the origin of species."[52] A reviewer in the New York Times, while skeptical, acknowledged that Darwin's "undeniable facts" would change our understanding of the mutability of the species.[53]

Karl Marx was another key figure in the intellectual history of the mid-century. Although one journalism historian points out that Marx saw "objectivity" as serving the elite, Marx, through his writing, also helped the cause of empiricism and scientific analysis, two elements of journalistic "objectivity." A champion of the secular for reasons more complicated than the famous line about religion being an opiate, Marx sought a philosophy grounded not on religion or abstractions, but on a careful, scientific analysis of social conditions. Marx argued philosophy was only successful when used as a tool to solve real problems and he himself applied a scientific approach to society. An examination of Marx's preface to his Capital (Das Kapital), reveals his concern for "scientific" analysis and shows how he viewed himself as a scientist. Marx's scientific analysis of European society and politics reached American news consumers through the hundreds of articles and editorials he wrote during ten years (1852-1862) that was employed by Horace Greeley as a European correspondent for the New York Tribune.[54]

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[52] Philip Applebaum, , Ed., Darwin: A Norton Critical Edition (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1979), p. 35. Note also how the "facts" are doing the work, not Darwin: it is the facts that "throw some light." Darwin, just as "objective" journalists, is painting himself as merely a collector of facts.

[53] New York Times, 28 March 1860.

Herbert Spencer, whose theories of evolution complement (and in some cases predate) Darwin's, and who shared Marx's concern for social causes, wrote a mammoth ten volume series, Synthetic Philosophy (1860-1893), which tries to bring biology, psychology, philosophy, and sociology under a single umbrella. His first volume, First Principles (1860), which laid the groundwork for the nine volumes that followed, argued that much of the world is knowable and namable, and that the various fields help us to understand the world, at least the "laws of the highest certainty." His attempt to draw sociology into the sciences, Principles of Sociology, and did much to shape that profession; U.S. journalists, too, took notice, and Spencer's work was discussed in newspapers and serialized in Popular Science Monthly (1874).[55]

Many fields of study, increasingly called the "social sciences," felt the pressure to be factual and scientific. One scientist, Simon Newcomb, was influenced by Darwin, Spencer, and John Stuart Mill, whose A System of Logic (1843), was a call for philosophical empiricism. Newcomb preached the doctrine of "scientific method" to all who would listen, and the social sciences embraced scientific method and "objectivity" in the years that followed.[56] Similarly, Baconism, the belief that reality could be understood through the "collection, classification, and interpretation of facts," came to dominate the professions of sociology, political science, and economics; by the 1880s, economics had become a "hard science," converted from ante-bellum notions of "political economy," with its "moral philosophy" and religious underpinnings.[57] And by the 1880s, objectivity was quickly becoming "central norm" of the historical profession.[58]

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[54] Janet Steele, The Sun Shines for All: Journalism and Ideology in the Life of Charles A. Dana (New York: University of Syracuse, 1993), p. 35; J. Herbert Altschull, Agents of Power: The Role of the News Media in Human Affairs (New York: Longman, 1984), pp. 90-97; Robert C. Tucker, Ed., The Marx-Engels Reader (2nd Ed. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1978), pp. 294-300.

[55] Mary O. Furner, Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Social Science, 1865-1905 (Lexington, Ky, 1975), p. 32.

[56] See the recent study, Albert E. Moyer, A Scientist's Voice in American Culture: Simon Newcomb and Rhetoric of Scientific Method (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992). Another important, although brief, discussion of philosophy during this period can be found in Schiller's Objectivity and the News, in which the author traces logical positivism (pp. 83-88).

The Telegraph and the Size of the World

Of all the scientific innovations of the 19th century, the telegraph was one of the most startling. The telegraph's impact on science and journalism was profound. On May 1, 1844, a crowd gathered on a Washington D.C. railroad platform to hear the latest news from nearby Baltimore, where the Whigs were meeting to nominate a Presidential ticket. Long before the train arrived, Samuel F. B. Morse stepped onto the platform and announced to the incredulous crowd that a man at the Baltimore train station had "telegraphed" the Whig's choice to him: "the ticket is Clay and Frelinghuysen," the message had said.[59] "Who the devil is Frelinghuysen?" asked a spectator, and reasoned that if the news was confirmed, then the obscurity of the second name would prove that Morse's announcement wasn't a lucky guess. When the train finally arrived, the news was confirmed, and so was the new invention, the Magnetic Telegraph.[60]

It is important to remember how much smaller the nation and the world became during the nineteenth century. The timeliness of news increased markedly. In 1817, John Calhoun, while contemplating the prospect of national "disunion," wrote "Let us then bind the Republic together with a perfect system of roads and canals.... Let us conquer space."[61] At that time, it took about a week for news from the Capitol to reach Boston. By the 1840s, the roads, canals, and railroads greatly increased the news speed, to about two or three days.[62] But by 1846, the telegraph had cut the time to seconds. For the first time in human history, news could travel faster than its human carriers.[63]

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[57] Furner, Advocacy and Objectivity, pp. xii,14, and 35.

[58] For a detailed discussion of "objectivity" in the historical profession, see Peter Novick, That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Novick, like Schudson in Discovering News sees the First World War as the end point of "objectivity's" strength as a operating principle. I have argued in the introduction and elsewhere that "objectivity" continues to be a goal in journalism to this day, or in the words of Herbert Gans, "journalists are...the strongest remaining bastion of logical positivism in America." (quoted in Schiller, Objectivity and the News, p. 197).

[59] Stephens, A History of News, p. 227.

[60] Manahem Blondheim, News Over the Wires : the Telegraph and the Flow of Public Information in America, 1844-1897 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 35-36.

The telegraph helped journalists and news consumers to put a lasso around the believable world. Before the telegraph, outrageous stories and hoaxes were occasional newspaper fare. In 1835, for example, the New York Sun ran its "moon hoax" about an astronomer whose giant telescope had explored the crevices of the moon. The story, which cited a fictitious scientific journal, the Edinburgh Journal of Science, reported on discoveries of mountains, forests, and, finally, after days of building up to it, animals and "man-bats." The story was reprinted in the columns of the Sun's rivals and was widely believed. A delegation from Yale was quickly dispatched to New York to investigate the reports.[64]

In 1835, a story about "man-bats" on the moon could still rouse a group of Ivy League scientists from their perch in New Haven. But by 1866, with the birth of the transatlantic cable, the moon story's sources could have been checked, and in a matter of hours, the astronomer's name and that of the journal would have proven to be false. In 1835, the distance required for a story to be believed was just across the Atlantic; confirmation would more than a month for a ships carrying letters to and from London.[65] The telegraph extended what one historian has called the

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[61] Sellers, The Market Revolution, p. 78.

[62] Blondheim, News Over the Wires, p. 11.

[63] James W. Carey makes the point about how the telegraph permitted the separation of communication and transportation in his "Technology and Ideology: The Case of The Telegraph." Prospects, Volume 8 (1982), p. 305.

[64] Schiller, Objectivity and the News, pp. 76-79.

[65] In 1818 a transatlantic crossing was a least 22 days; in 1838, steamships began making the voyage and one, in 1839, made the trip in thirteen days. In Stephens, A History of News, p. 226.

"awareness of the impossible."[66] With the birth of the telegraph, the world became smaller and the stories of monsters became increasingly less frequent. Nowadays, "man-bats" and other monsters can rarely be found outside of the pages of certain supermarket tabloids.

"What has become of space?" asked the New York Herald in 1844, the telegraph's first year. Providing its own answer, the paper announced that it had been "annihilated."[67] In 1844 the annihilation of space meant mainly a quicker reporting of events. In the years that followed, however, space was annihilated by what a number of critics refer to as the commodification of news by the telegraph and the press wire services. With the founding of the AP in 1848, Wolff in 1855, and Reuter in 1858, a number of companies sought to market news as a salable commodity. James Carey writes that telegraphic news demanded a "'scientific' language," stripping news of "the local, the regional and colloquial."[68] Other studies confirm this, and while the inverted pyramid form was not standard until the end of the century, researchers have discovered a decline of "bias" in news after 1872, especially in news sent over the wires.[69] In the middle part of the century, to sell to newspapers of different political positions-- the elite Republican New York Times, the prosouth Herald, and the eccentric and socialistic Tribune, to name a few-- the wire services had to repress partisan signals and seek to produce a commodity that would be palatable to all.[70]

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[66] Lucien Febvre quoted in Mitchell Stephens' A History of News, p. 126. Stephens argues that literacy and printing had been limiting monsters and make-believe since at least the 1400s. Walter Lippmann's introduction to his seminal Public Opinion (New York: Free Press, 1949) contains an interesting discussion of a tangential, yet related topic: the relationship between "the world outside and the pictures in our heads." In this discussion, Lippmann discusses the fate of a group of island-bound of Europeans at the start of the First World War who did not yet know that they were at war and enemies. "There was a time for each man when he was still adjusted to an environment that no longer existed." (3).

[67] Stephens, A History of News, p. 226.

[68] Carey, "Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph," p. 310. Carey also discusses the emergence of "Standard Time" in the 1870s, which sought to replace the local, erratic times with a system that divided the country, and later the world, into time zones, yet another example of the submergence of the local.

[69] See especially Donald L. Shaw's, "News Bias and the Telegraph: a Study of Historical Change" Journalism Quarterly, (Spring, 1967), pp. 5-11.

By the summer of 1866, the next major cholera epidemic in New York, the wire services and newspapers had stripped out of much of their partisan and local clothing, as Lawrence Gobright, the Washington agent for the Associated Press, explained:

> My business is merely to communicate facts. My instructions do not allow me to make any comments upon the facts which I communicate. My despatches are sent to papers of all manner of politics, and the editors say they are able to make their own comments upon the facts which are sent to them.... I do not act as politician belonging to any school, but try to be truthful and impartial. My despatches are merely dry matters of fact and detail.[71]

Gobright's "dry" and bland gruel, without the spice and of partisan criticism and local dialect, had helped to produce a unified journalistic voice, a scientific voice, and a faith that reporters could actually write to *everyone* and be understood by all. While science was triumphing over philosophy and religion, the newspapers and wire services were asserting a victory over partisanship and regionalism.

1866 and the Last Cholera Epidemic

In the weeks before the cholera epidemic of the summer of 1866, it was becoming apparent that New Yorkers would not place their faith in fasting, prayer, or vague notions of heavenly atmosphere; neither would they abide talk of speculative "cures" and "philosophical" and anti-empirical ideas of contagion. Instead, the city mobilized an efficient bureaucratic machine with an aim to muscle out the disease with science and technology. The Metropolitan Board of Health organized its bureaucracy into distinct units: the Bureau of Vital Statistics, the Bureau of

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[70] Stephens, A History of News, p. 259; Carey, "Technology and Ideology: The Case of The Telegraph."

[71] Congressional report, (United States House of Representatives, Judiciary Committee. "Telegraphic Censorship." 37th Congress, 2nd Session: Report 64. March 20, 1862. pp. 1-14.

Complaints, with its Sanitary Superintendent and his Sanitary Inspectors, and a sophisticated hospital administration: Each hospital district would be run by a Physician-in-Chief, who was required to make daily visits to his hospitals. There, Resident Physicians would keep an "accurate medical history," including "name, age, sex, nativity, occupation, residence, symptoms, and treatment."[72] "During the coming Summer," announced the Times in the late Spring, "the City is, for all practical purposes, to be governed by the 'Board of Health.'"[73]

The rule of the Metropolitan Board Health was an active one, and it reflected a faith in data gathering and a desire to take rapid and forceful measures based on pragmatic and empirical notions. The "Code of Health Ordinances," passed in May, 1866 required that all diseases be reported to the Board's Bureau of Records within twenty-four hours.[74] The Registrar of Vital Statistics would then put out statistics and corresponding charts, including the "New York Mortality Table," breaking down all diseases by deaths per week and ward, comparisons with cholera epidemics in previous years and with epidemics in other countries, and the sex, nativity, and age of the victims.[75] The table, "The Sanitary Police Report" (below), reveals both the extent of data gathering and the zeal of the "Sanitary Police" in their attempts to rid the city of sanitary "nuisances":

The Sanitary Police Report.

Capt. Bowen G Lord's report of the work of the Police Sanitary Company, for the week ending June 19, is as follows:

No. of complaints of nuisances received.............	536

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[72] Times, 8, 1 August, 1866; Herald, 8 May 1866; Times, 2 June 1866.

[73] Times, 1 May 1866.

[74] Times, 20 May, 9 August 1866.

[75] Times, 8, 1,9 August, 2 June 1866.

No. of notices served for abatement................	952 ....
No. of sinks water-closets cleaned.................	437

REMOVED FROM CITY LIMITED

No. of Loads of night soil...........................	1,796
Number of dead horses, cows, goats, hogs, dogs, and cats and calves seized.................................	151

Number of barrels of offal-- 6,000.

Mentions of "atmosphere" could not be found in the reports of the Sanitary Police. They may well have been too busy carting away the dead horses and cleaning outhouses to worry about the weather.

If the organizing principle of the 1832 and 1849 newspapers' coverage of cholera was God and sin, that of 1866 was much less lofty. So much so, in fact, that it would not be too much to say that during that time, the newspapers' chief concern shifted from God to outhouses. Column after column in the three major New York dailies discussed, usually without the least mention of sin or God, the best ways to disinfect privies.[76] The Times reported that all doctors now agree that "the excreta, and especially the rice-water discharges of cholera patients are at least one means of propagating the cholera-poison and they urge... disinfection ... of all privies, water-closets, and cess-pools connected with the sick."[77] A full majority of all news stories researched for this paper had at least a mention of excreta. The Herald reported a death of a woman, adding that she had just emptied all the water-closets of her house and used the contents to fertilize her garden.[78] In the Tribune came a report of the worst centers of cholera in the city; in the story, the newspaper described the "foul effluvia of... overflowing privies" and the fact that most outhouses in the district were not connected to sewers.[79] What more fitting way is there to enter the age of "realism" than with a replacement of God with the "foul effluvia of... overflowing privies"?

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[76] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 230. The New York Times' coverage seems more secular and less subjective than that of the Tribune and Herald, which often tried to deny the severity of the epidemic (Tribune 10 August 1866). The Herald even went so far as to suggest that any coverage of the epidemic is alarmist (Tribune, 4 August 1866; Herald, 1 July 1866).

[77] Times, 1 July 1866. In The Cholera Years, Rosenberg explains that by 1866, "few intelligent physicians...doubted contagion" (195).

[78] Herald, 4 May 1866.

Rosenberg, in The Cholera Years, explains how arguments in medical journals based on "philosophical" arguments gave way to ones based on "statistics and disciplined observation."[80] This can be said of the newspapers as well, which resembled medical journals in their scientific language. In an article in the Tribune, a writer describes the "pathognemonic [sic] characteristics of the disease": "Violent purging and vomiting, rice-water dejections, cold tongue, muscular cramps, and collapse,"[81] a description based on empirical evidence more than on religious notions. Similarly detailed and scientific were the descriptions of how to disinfect privies and clothing, with exact measurements of disinfecting agents provided for readers.

Given the level of detail about cause, contagion, and disinfecting procedures, it is surprising that there are few mentions of cures in the newspaper articles read for this study. One explanation of this may be that as doctors became truly members of profession, and as hospitals became less charnel houses and more places for systematic care,[82] the business of curing became increasingly less a matter of public concern and consideration.

Gone in 1866 were the attacks on doctors seen in newspapers in past epidemics. In fact, the information that newspapers reported to the public came increasingly from doctors serving as designated sources in authority. While reporters did not have to operate under restrictions as severe as those imposed during the Civil War, they did get much of their news from organized and tightly controlled sources. "The records of the in the office of the Registrar of Vital Statistics show..." began one report in the Times.[83] From this source, the Metropolitan Board of Health, the Bureau of Complaints, and the Physicians-in-Chief, the papers seemed to get most of their material. As it did during the Civil War, the telegraph played a major role in the dissemination of information in the summer of 1866. The Atlantic Cable, completed at the height of the 1866 epidemic, brought cholera news from Europe, while in New York the cholera cases were reported to police precincts and then telegraphed to the Sanitary Superintendent, who in turn dispatched his Inspectors.[84] News reports of cholera were telegraphed from city to city and overseas as well.

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[79] Tribune, 3 August 1866.

[80] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 198.

[81] Tribune, 2 July 1866.

[82] Rosenberg touches on this generally in his discussions of the medical violence of the 1830s and 1840s. The systematic care in the 1866 epidemics is revealed the newspapers as well, as these pages have shown.

Many of the shifts described in this paper can be found in a single paragraph, a lead of fine inverted pyramid article in the New York Tribune:

> The officers of the Board of Health, yesterday, took charge of the premises No. 14 Cherry St., thoroughly disinfected them and burned that portion of the clothing of the deceased, John Fitzgerald, which had been soiled by dejections during his illness.[85]

The article conveys the organization of the medical community, an understanding of how cholera is conveyed, and a concern not with religious issues, but with empirical investigation and concrete action to stop the spread of the disease. The "objective" paradigm had prevailed, both in science and in journalism.

Conclusion

Just as the transportation revolution was at the bottom of the spread of journalism and cholera in New York in 1832, the epidemic of 1866 saw another confluence of forces: the first successful transatlantic cable and New York's last major cholera epidemic. The ascendancy of science and the growing understanding that empiricism could be both possible and profitable were at the bottom of both developments. Once again, New York was frightened by the ships filled with cholera-stricken Europeans. But unlike in the world of the earlier epidemics, in 1866 doctors and journalists knew what to do, and the 90% decrease in mortality from 1849 shows that the world had changed. This paper has outlined this change, both in the journalism of the day and in the culture in general. From 1832 to 1866, journalism and the wider culture had moved from a religious and philosophical paradigm to one of "naive empiricism" and scientific method. More and more people, including journalists, had moved their gaze from the heavens to the privies; and more and more had left the Virgin to view the dynamo.

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[83] Times, 8 August 1866.

[84] Rosenberg, The Cholera Years, p. 206; Tribune, 2 July 1866.

[85] Tribune, 1 June 1866.

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Observers of Crisis and Compromise:
The Washington Correspondents of 1850

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Abstract

Observers of Crisis and Compromise: The Washington Correspondents of 1850

In researching my forthcoming book on the Texas-New Mexico boundary dispute in the crisis and Compromise of 1850, I found the newspaper columns written by Washington correspondents to be an invaluable source of information largely ignored by previous scholars. A surprising number of newspapers in 1850--I found 70 of them--regularly printed often long and detailed Washington letters, and some papers had several correspondents. Some of the letters were written by congressmen and editors in Washington, but most were written by professional journalists who observed proceedings from the press galleries. Most such correspondents remain unidentifiable, but the identities of others can be discovered despite the journalists' tendency to sign their letters with pseudonyms or to leave them unsigned. From statements in newspapers, revelations by fellow correspondents, and comparison of writing styles, identities of some journalists can be firmly or probably established. The most prolific correspondents of 1850 were Francis Grund and James Harvey, and this paper establishes their identities as correspondents for several more papers than historians had previously associated them with. Numerous other correspondents also receive their first firm identification as Washington correspondents in this paper. The paper concludes with a plea for increased use of the Washington correspondents' reports by historians of the sectional crisis. A compiled list of newspapers, correspondents, and pseudonyms accompanies the paper.

Observers of Crisis and Compromise: The Washington Correspondents of 1850

The Crisis and Compromise of 1850--the last great sectional adjustment of slavery-related issues prior to the Civil War--has proven a fruitful subject of research for many historians and biographers. The basic outlines of the 1850 struggle between North and South are well known--the rise of the question of slavery extension into western territories, the initial proposals by Sen. Henry Clay of Kentucky for an overall settlement of territorial and other slavery-related issues, the titanic Congressional session from December 1849 to September 1850, the death of President Zachary Taylor and the accession of President Millard Fillmore, and the final achievement of a compromise settlement through the passage of several bills. But the subject of this paper is not really the elements involved in the crisis or a new interpretation of the issues.

In order to investigate the 1850 crisis as thoroughly and extensively as possible, serious researchers should avail themselves of the letters written by Washington correspondents during the 1850 crisis. Strangely enough, however, a review of the secondary literature on the subject reveals that previous scholars have largely ignored the Washington correspondents' letters. Historians have sometimes noted a few of these,[1] but have seemed most interested in using newspaper editorials rather than correspondents' reports in their research.

Just why historians have underutilized the daily, semiweekly, or weekly reports by Washington correspondents on the actions of Congress and its members is somewhat mystifying. Researchers have continually mined the personal correspondence of political leaders and the records of debates and proceedings for information and insights. But correspondents' reports also merit attention as sources of information. First of all, there were a large number of such reports and they were often quite lengthy. For every day of the long session of 1850, detailed reports would appear in a surprisingly large number of newspapers. Most of the letters were written by correspondents paid by various editors to report Congressional action as they observed it from the vantage point of the Senate and House galleries. Some of these correspondents also held government jobs as clerks.[2] Other letters were written by members of Congress themselves. In order to find as much of this newspaper correspondence as possible, the researcher can conveniently borrow many papers on microfilm while others must be examined in hard copy at the Library of Congress or other repositories. The work is time-consuming but rewarding.

In 1850 there were roughly 250 daily papers in the U.S. and many more weeklies and semi-weeklies than that.[3] In the sample of some 250 papers of all types examined for this project, this researcher discovered that seventy of these papers had at least one correspondent whose letters appeared on a fairly regular basis. A number of presses in the major cities maintained two or more letter-writers. Many other papers printed only an occasional letter from Washington. The sheer existing volume of this material renders these reports a major source of information on national politics. The papers are sometimes difficult to locate--only a few scattered issues of some such as the New York Daily Globe still exist--and locating correspondents' reports requires many tedious hours of research.

Taken together, the "letters" assembled by Washington correspondents during the 1850 crisis constitute an unrivaled source of information about the struggle and those involved in trying to solve it or exacerbate it. Some obviously were meatier in content and more worthwhile for the modern researcher than were others. The Congressional Globe recorded the debates very well and the Journals of the Senate and House accurately recounted the procedures and votes. But there were many added details, sometimes important and sometimes less so, which cannot be gleaned from these sources nor from the personal correspondence of the members of Congress, but which can be discovered in the recorded observations of Washington correspondents in the newspapers. These correspondents also expressed opinions and provided information about Presidents Taylor and Fillmore and their cabinet members, administration policies and the public mood toward them, happenings in Washington society, and their fellow correspondents.

Who were the observers of the 1850 crisis? While a very few were well-known and can be identified despite their signing pseudonyms to their letters or leaving them unsigned, historians actually know very little about the identities of most of the antebellum Washington correspondents. Modern scholarship by

Robert Durden, F. B. Marbut, and Donald Ritchie[4] has opened the door to this neglected aspect of newspaper journalism, but much yet remains to be done. This paper on the correspondents for the particular year of 1850 will contribute some new information but may more importantly demonstrate how much more there is for historians of newspaper journalism to learn.

As mentioned previously, some newspaper correspondents can be identified as congressmen themselves. Free Soiler Joshua Giddings wrote letters for the weekly Ashtabula Sentinel, which he co-owned, in his home district near Cleveland, Ohio and also wrote almost daily to the Cleveland True Democrat, a Free Soil paper, sometimes under the pseudonym "Cato", but more often signing no name. Comparison of letters in the Sentinel and True Democrat led this researcher to conclude that both papers shared the same correspondent, and Washington correspondent "H" of the Louisville Courier referred to Giddings in one of his reports as "Caty."[5] Another Free Soil leader, George W. Julian, wrote regular letters, using no name or initials, to the Centreville Indiana True Democrat in his home district.[6] Free Soil Democrat "Long" John Wentworth wrote letters, using no name or initials, for his own newspaper, the Chicago Democrat.[7] Whig James Brooks of New York was almost certainly one of the several correspondents for the New York Express, which he and his brother Erastus Brooks (correspondent "E.B.") owned, although it is unclear which of the other correspondents James Brooks was.[8] Congressman-elect Edward Gilbert wrote letters as "E.G." for his newspaper, the San Francisco Alta California, detailing the struggle for California's admission as a state in 1850.[9] Which other congressmen may have hidden their identities behind pseudonyms or left their letters unsigned remains to be discovered.

Among the professional journalists seated in the galleries above, none was more prolific in 1850 than Francis Grund, an avid promoter of compromise and an impassioned essayist for mostly Democratic presses. Most well-known as "X" in the Baltimore Sun and "Observer" in the Philadelphia Public Ledger, Grund's identity was also divulged by an enemy editor as "W" in the New York Sun, "Osceola" in the Boston Post (and its weekly Boston Statesman), "Franklin" in the Boston Times, and "Union" in the Concord New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette.[10] Grund also wrote some letters as "Pozzi di Borgo" in the New York Herald[11]. He also probably wrote the letters which bear his style and are signed "Franklin" in the Richmond Republican, even though it was a Whig paper.[12] Grund, like other very opinionated commentators, often dipped his pen in acid when writing about politicians whose views he disagreed with. One of Grund's favorite targets in 1850 was the pompous anti-compromise senator from Missouri, Thomas Hart Benton. After absorbing Francis Grund's barbs for a long time, Benton encountered Grund one day in the Senate antechamber. Grund bowed politely to the senator, saying "Ah!, Good morning, Col. Benton, how is your health this morning, sir?" Benton responded by asking him if he was Grund and if he wrote as "X" in the Baltimore Sun, to which Grund answered affirmatively. "Well, sir," said Benton, "I have only to say that while I can stand your abuse, I can dispense with your bows. Good morning, sir." And the interchange ended.[12]

The most energetic letter-writer for Whig papers was James Harvey. Known primarily for his correspondence as "Independent" in the Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette, Harvey also toiled as "Veritas" in the New York Courier and Enquirer, "Viator" in the Boston Journal, "Argus" in the Cincinnati Gazette, and as an unsigned correspondent in the St. Louis Intelligencer and its companion the New Era. Strongly Whig in his partisan sympathies, Harvey was a close associate of President Taylor's secretary of state, John M. Clayton of Delaware. While ordinarily a reliable observer of Washington politics, James Harvey also became taken in by a hoax in August 1850. He thus presents to the modern researcher an example of how correspondents' assertions must be used, like any other source, with caution. In August, at the height of political paranoia over the fate of the Union, Harvey was suckered by some fraudulent document into believing that the pro-Southern Rose Greenhow and her husband Robert were in Mexico to foment an alliance between that country and a confederacy of seceding Southern slave states. Harvey wrote alarming letters about this in several papers and two other writers for Philadelphia papers authored similar dispatches, but most Washington correspondents correctly labeled the scheme a hoax. Harvey's conspiracy claims proved groundless.

The scholarly Robert Greenhow was in Mexico on a diplomatic mission for the State Department relating to land claims in California. While he and his vivacious wife had been close friends of John Calhoun, there is no evidence that they were engaged in a pro-Southern plot in Mexico. Harvey soon became ill for a few weeks and the Washington correspondents all gave up writing about the scheme.[13]

One radical pro-Southern correspondent was Joseph A. Scoville, John Calhoun's private secretary until the great South Carolina senator's death on March 31, 1850. Scoville claimed an association with several papers such as the New York Herald, the Charleston Mercury, the Columbia (SC) Telegraph, and the Macon Georgia Telegraph. A few letters signed "J.A.S." were certainly his, but it is uncertain which other letters were by Scoville.[14] Another correspondent, Eliab Kingman, was one of the best known of the Washington letter-writers. Kingman used the pen name "Ion" in the Baltimore Sun and reportedly wrote letters for other Southern presses, but it is not certain which ones those were.[15]

The biggest difficulty, of course, in discovering the identities of correspondents is that nearly all of them employed noms de plume or left their letters unsigned, as shown by the list accompanying this paper. Some editors who acted as correspondents--Horace Greeley ("H.G.") of the New York Tribune, William Schouler ("W.S.") of the Boston Atlas, Samuel Kettell ("S.K.") of the Boston Courier, Charles de Morse ("C. de M.") of Clarksville (TX) Northern Standard, Erastus Brooks ("E.B.") of the New York Express, and William C. Carrington ("W.C.C.") of the Richmond Times--are easily identifiable from their initials. The same applies to reporters James S. Pike ("J.S.P.") of the Portland Advertiser, the Boston Courier and subsequently the New York Tribune, and to Stephen P. Andrews ("S.P.A.") of the New York Tribune.[16] Some who used pseudonyms, such as Grund and Harvey, were so prominently knows that little mystery enshrouded their authorship of letters for some papers. But even in their cases, the discovery of which other papers they were writing for depends on revelations in other newspapers or comparison of letters in the various papers.

Most correspondents' identities in 1850 remain uncertain or unknown. But some others' identities are certain or at least probable. Among the ones positively identified were Edward Harriman, "Potomac" in the Baltimore Patriot and Commercial Gazette, whom Horace Greeley considered, along with Kingman and Harvey, a reporter able to learn secrets.[18] Another correspondent was James Lawrenson, who, as "Mercury" in the Baltimore Sun, complemented the political observations of Grund and Kingman by keeping readers informed about non-political matters in Washington and elsewhere in the District.[19] Among correspondents for New York newspapers, George B. Wallis, sometimes signing himself "The Doctor" and usually leaving his columns unsigned, labored as the New York Herald's most regular letter-writer.[20] A former Texas newspaperman, William D. Wallach, corresponded from Washington for the staunchly Democratic New York Daily Globe in

1850, reportedly under the name "John Taylor of Caroline".[21] The New York Express maintained several correspondents in Washington, but its principal one was N.W. Adams, who signed himself "Juvenal". His correspondence came to an abrupt halt in early August, after he collapsed in the House of Representatives with symptoms of cholera. Adams was also the correspondent for the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser up to that time.[22] One of the columnists whose writing style was quite humorous, and bitingly so at times, was "Il Segretario" of the Louisville Journal. A few other papers identified him as the former secretary of the Mexican claims commission, which explains the writer's choice of pseudonym, and a former member of the Washington National Intelligencer staff. His name was Edward W. Johnson.[23]

Two other letter-writers in 1850 can be positively identified, although they were not regular correspondents but simply personages who wrote series of informative letters for Philadelphia papers during their visits to Washington. Both of these series focused primarily on providing readers with colorful physical descriptions of Senate and House members. One set of letters, entitled "Glances at Congress", appeared in the Philadelphia Pennsylvanian from April to June and was written by that paper's co-editor John W. Forney while he was in Washington seeking unsuccessfully to become clerk of the House of Representatives. Forney did not sign his name nor use a pseudonym.[24] From June to August, the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post printed the letters from Washington by "Grace

Greenwood", nom de plume of Sara Jane Clarke (Lippincott after her marriage in 1853).[25]

The identification of two other correspondents should be classified as highly probable. The Washington correspondent for Cummings' Telegraphic Evening Bulletin in Philadelphia signed his letters "Henrico". Material in Rep. Alexander Stephens' Papers indicates that this correspondent was probably John E. Tuel, an experienced newspaperman. One of "Henrico"'s columns during the 1850 crisis achieved particular notoriety for charging Reps. Alexander Stephens and Robert Toombs of Georgia with having personally badgered President Zachary Taylor on the day after he became deathly ill in early July. Though the charge was probably well-founded, "Henrico" partially retracted it by changing the date of the meeting to the day before Taylor became ill.[26] Another probable identification is that of Alexander C. Bullitt as "Le Diable Boiteux" in the New Orleans Picayune. Bullitt, a former co-editor of the Picayune, had come to Washington with the Taylor administration to edit the Whig administration organ, the Washington (DC) Republic. But in May 1850, after attempting to strike a middle ground between the anti-compromise Taylor and the pro-compromise Sen. Henry Clay of Kentucky, the administration replaced Bullitt with Allen Hall as editor. That coincided with the beginning of regular Picayune correspondence from Washington, some of it unsigned but most letters signed "Le Diable Boiteux", literally in French, "the devil on two sticks", a phrase used in reference to a cripple. Bullitt may have adopted the nom de plume to indicate that he had been crippled by being fired as the Republic's editor. Bullitt rejoined the Picayune staff in January 1851.[27]

The identifications of two other Washington correspondents are worth some educated guesses. The Philadelphia Pennsylvanian's regular correspondent "Examiner" was one letter-writer who supported, in even more detailed fashion, "Henrico"'s charge about the Stephens-Toombs "deathbed visit" to Taylor, although no one seems to have taken notice of "Examiner"'s report at the time. "Examiner" may have been William Curran, listed in a Washington directory for 1850 as a printer. John Forney, in one of his "Glances at Congress", referred to leaving the gallery and letting "Mr. Curran and the other reporters" have their seats back. Forney had had no qualms about identifying reporters for other newspapers in an earlier column of the same series, but he chose to identify "Mr. Curran" only as one among several reporters. This reference may mean that Forney had been temporarily occupying the seat normally taken by the correspondent for Forney's own Pennsylvanian, which would mean that "Examiner" was a "Mr. Curran".[28] Another guess involved the correspondent for both the New York Evening Post and the New York Commercial Advertiser. Francis Grund wrote that both papers in 1850 were using the same correspondent. The Post's letters were signed "X", while the Commercial Advertiser's were signed "M". The writer in both cases may have been Charles March, who had used "M" when he had worked for Greeley's Tribune in 1848 and who had also worked for the Post.[29]

The census records for the District of Columbia in 1850 list twenty-two men whose occupation is described as "reporter", including Kingman, Grund, Wallach, Wallis, and Harriman. Also listed as reporters were Henry M. Parkhurst, John C. McElhane, James and Charles D. Simington, William Lord, William H. Burr, W. B. Send, G. W. Brega, Lawrence A. Gobright, Francis Murphy, Edward Hart, Robert Sutton, William Hunt, W. J. Niles, J. G. Moore, S. M. Shaw, and John Agg. The last-named reporter, Agg, provided summaries of Congressional proceedings for Washington newspapers. Lawrence Gobright enjoyed a long, distinguished career as a Washington correspondent and wrote a book about it, but neglected to reveal what papers he wrote for or what names he used, if any. Some of the others listed as reporters in the census were undoubtedly correspondents for out-of-town newspapers, but it is not evident which ones they were. Some correspondents were not listed in the census for the District at all, while some are listed but not as reporters. Stephen P. Andrews appears as an "author/publisher", James Lawrenson as a "clerk", and Edward W. Johnson as "Secretary to Mexican Commission."[30]

How reliable a source were the reports generated by Washington correspondents in 1850? Some editors wrote disparaging remarks about Washington "scribblers" recounting as facts the mere rumors they had overheard in barrooms, but those jealous editors did not have a correspondent in Washington for their papers.[31] Certainly, reporters' letters must be used with caution just like any other source. Given all of the inaccuracies, misstatements, occasional hoaxes, and bitter partisanship one might encounter in these letters, discerning historians can still find them a tool of inestimable value in elucidating aspects and events of the sectional crisis. Most importantly, these observers' letters often contained information available from no other source for historians to research. Historians are always looking "through a glass darkly" anyway, so it only makes sense to look through as many windows as we can find. And these observers of crisis and compromise in 1850, identifiable and unidentifiable, have provided us with many windows to look through.

Notes

1. The most often quoted letter by a Washington correspondent during the 1850 struggle--and about the only one extensively quoted--is the report by "A Looker On" describing the reactions of senators to the destruction of the Omnibus Bill on July 31. New York Morning Express, August 2, 1850.

2. Cleveland Daily True Democrat, September 2, 1850; and Washington(DC) Daily Union, October 14, 1849.

3. Nashville Daily Centre-State American, September 8, 1850.

4. Robert F. Durden, James Shepherd Pike: Republicanism and the American Negro, 1850-1882 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1957); F. B. Marbut, News from the Capital: The Story of Washington Reporting (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971); and Donald A. Ritchie, Press Gallery: Congress and the Washington Correspondents (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).

5. Compare for example accounts of House proceedings in correspondents' letters to both the Sentinel and True Democrat, both printed in Ashtabula (OH) Sentinel, February 16, 1850. See also Louisville Morning Courier, August 19, 1850.

6. Patrick W. Riddleberger, George Washington Julian: Radical Republican (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1966), 57.

7. Even though Wentworth did not sign his letters to the Chicago Democrat, other papers which reprinted them labeled them

as Wentworth's. Cleveland Daily Plain Dealer, June 12, 1850; Milwaukee Daily Sentinel and Gazette, June 21, 1850; and Milwaukee Daily Wisconsin, September 16, 1850.

8. On James Brooks, see biographical sketch by Allan Nevins in Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., Dictionary of American Biography (10 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957-1958), 2:77-79; and on Erastus Brooks, see biographical sketch by Harold Howland in Ibid., 2:76-77.

9. San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 21, 1850.

10. Concord New Hampshire Statesman, June 21, 1850.

11. Holman Hamilton and James L. Crouthamel, "A Man for Both Parties: Francis J. Grund as Political Chameleon," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, 97 (October, 1973): 470.

12. Not only does the style of these letters appear to be Grund's and the pseudonym duplicate his nom de plume in the Boston Times, but the Republican itself indicated that their correspondent, despite the paper's praise for his ability, did not necessarily reflect the Republican's Whig viewpoint. The paper was pro-compromise, and Grund, at that time a Democrat, was vehemently so. Grund's attitude on compromise in 1850, rather than partisanship, probably accounts for the Republican's contracting with him to act as their Washington correspondent. Richmond Republican, August 20, 1850.

13. New York Herald, April 25, 1850. The incident was recounted by the Herald's regular Washington correspondent George B. Wallis, in this instance using his pseudonym "The Doctor".

14. Ibid., May 3, 1850; Philadelphia Pennsylvanian, May 13, 1850; and Mark J. Stegmaier, "Treachery or Hoax? The Rumored Southern Conspiracy to Confederate With Mexico," Civil War History, 35 (March, 1989): 28-38.

15. New York Herald, May 3, 1850. A biographical sketch of Scoville by Nelson F. Adkins is in Johnson and Malone, eds., DAB, 8:513.

16. Harold A. Williams, The Baltimore Sun, 1837-1897 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 269; and John W. Forney, Anecdotes of Public Men (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Bros., 1873, 1881), 1:279 and 2:245.

17. Durden, Pike, 13; Ritchie, Press Gallery, 46-47; James S. Pike, First Blows of the Civil War (New York: American News Co., 1879), 1-83; and Madeleine B. Stern, The Pantarch: A Biography of Stephen Pearl Andrews (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), 70.

18. Washington (DC) Daily Union, October 14, 1849; and Pike, First Blows, 49.

19. Washington (DC) Union, October 14,1849.

20. New York Herald, April 6, 1850; Philadelphia Pennsylvanian, May 13, 1850; and Marbut, News from the Capital, 85.

21. New York Herald, April 6, 1850; Milledgeville (GA) Southern Recorder, September 10, 1850; and Samuel W. Geiser, "William Douglas Wallach", Southwest Review, 29 (Winter, 1944): 291-297. Unfortunately almost no issues of the New York Globe for

1850 still exist.

22. N. W. Adams was identified by another Washington correspondent in the Philadelphia Cummings' Telegraphic Evening Bulletin, July 19, 1850. The only person in the 1850 census who fit those initials and last name in the District was Nathan W. Adams, a 26-year-old from New York, but the census listed no profession for this person. Microfilm M-432, roll 56, p. 242, "Population Schedules of the Seventh Census of the United States," Record Group 29, National Archives. The correspondent for the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser until early August usually left his name unsigned but sometimes wrote letters as "A", "Juvenal", or "N.W.A." for that paper. Another correspondent, signing himself "C.F.P.", took over the correspondence for the Advertiser in early August, at the same time that "Juvenal" of the Express became ill. Undoubtedly this earlier correspondent for the Advertiser in 1850 was the same N. W. Adams who wrote for the Express. Buffalo Commercial Advertiser, July 5 and August 10, 1850; and Utica Oneida Morning Herald, July 19, 1850.

23. "Il Segretario" was identified as "E.W. Johnston" in Buffalo Morning Express, September 17, 1850; and St. Louis Intelligencer, July 2, 1850; and as "G. W. Johnston" in the Philadelphia Pennsylvanian, July 18, 1850. His name as given in the census is the one I have given. M-432, roll 57, p. 268, RG-29, NA.

24. Philadelphia Pennsylvanian, April 30, May 2, 6, 13, 18, 22, 24, 31, and June 17, 1850.

25. Philadelphia Saturday Evening post, June 22, 29, July 6, 13, 27, and August 3, 1850. A biographical sketch of Clarke (Lippincott) by Barbara Welter is in Edward T. James, ed., Notable American Women, 1607-1950 (3 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 2:407-409. Clarke of course did not observe from the press galleries. Earlier in 1850, Jane Grey Swisshelm had become the first woman admitted to the Senate's press gallery as a correspondent for Horace Greeley's New York Tribune. However, after repeating a vicious rumor about Sen. Daniel Webster of Massachusetts in her first report, Swisshelm found herself no longer working for the Tribune. Ritchie, Press Gallery, 42-46. Some other correspondents' columns describing Senate and House members are in: Boston Yankee Blade, March 2, 9, 23, June 8, and August 17 and 24, 1850; Clarksville (TX) Northern Standard, August 10, 1850; Concord Independent Democrat, July 11, 1850; Detroit Daily Advertiser, September 9, 1850; Louisville Daily Journal, July 30, 1850; Montgomery Alabama Journal, July 16, 1850; and Pittsburgh Daily Gazette, June 5 and 26, 1850.

26. On Tuel and the "deathbed visit" controversy, see Mark J. Stegmaier, "Zachary Taylor Versus the South," Civil War History, 33 (September, 1987): 230-241.

27. Holman Hamilton, Prologue to Conflict: The Crisis and Compromise of 1850 (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1964), 97; and Fayette Copeland, Kendall of the Picayune (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943), 123. In 1850 the Mobile Register asserted that Bullitt was "Le Diable Boiteux", but some

New Orleans papers expressed the belief that it was Grund or someone else. The style of "Le Diable Boiteux"'s letters was certainly not Grund's. See: New Orleans Bee, July 3, 1850; and New Orleans Daily Delta, July 31, 1850.

28. Philadelphia Pennsylvanian, May 22, 1850; and Edward Waite, comp., The Washington Directory and Congressional and Executive Register for 1850 (Washington: Columbus Alexander, 1850), 22.

29. Ritchie, Press Gallery, 41-43; and Boston Daily Times, May 6, 1850.

30. M-432, roll 56, pp. 66, 80, 98-99, 141, 150, 152, 217-218, 221, 232, 238, 262, 269, and roll 57, pp. 4, 11, 254, 268; Marbut, News from the Capital, 30; and Lawrence A. Gobright, Recollections of Men and Things at Washington During the Third of a Century (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1869).

31. Veteran editor Mordecai M. Noah of the New York Sunday Times and Noah's Weekly Messenger expressed this view in 1850. Cited in Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post, May 4, 1850.

NEWSPAPERS WITH WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS IN 1850

(Some papers not listed had isolated Washington letters during the 1850 crisis)

NEWSPAPER	PSEUDONYM (if any)	REAL NAME OF CORRESPONDENT
Albany State Register	"F"	

Ashtabula Sentinel	---	Joshua R. Giddings
Baltimore Clipper	"Lucius"	
	"Aristides"	
Baltimore Patriot...	"Potomac"	Edward Harriman
	"Pinkney"	
Baltimore Republican...	"Eustis"	
Baltimore Sun	"X"	Francis Grund
	"Mercury"	James Lawrenson
	"Ion"	Eliab Kingman
Boston Atlas	"W.S."	William Schouler
Boston Courier	"J.S.P."	James S. Pike
	"S.K."	Samuel Kettell
Boston Emancipator...	"Bay State"	
Boston Journal	"Viator"	James Harvey
Boston Olive Branch	"Algernon"	
Boston Pilot	"Alpha"	
Boston Post	"Osceola"	Francis Grund
Boston Puritan Recorder	"D"	
Boston Times	"Franklin"	Francis Grund
Boston Yankee Blade	"Gamboge"	
Buffalo Commercial Advertiser	---/"Juvenal"/"A"/"N.W.A."	N.W. Adams
	"C.F.P."	
Centreville IN True Democrat	---	George W. Julian
Charleston Courier	---	
Charleston Mercury	"Davis"	
	"H"	

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chicago Democrat	---	John Wentworth
Chicago *Western Citizen*	"Southron"	
Cincinnati Gazette	"Argus	James Harvey
	"Scioto"	
Clarksville (TX) *Northern Standard*	"CdeM"	Charles de Morse
Cleveland *True Democrat*	"Cato"/---	Joshua R. Giddings
Columbia (SC) *Telegraph*	"Palmetto"	
Concord *NH Patriot*...	"Union"	Francis Grund
Dayton Journal	"Cassi"	
Detroit Advertiser	---	
Indianapolis *IN State Sentinel*	"Xavier"	
Jackson *Mississippian*	"Ides of November"	
Louisville Courier	"H"	
Louisville Journal	"Il Segretario"	Edward W. Johnson
Macon *GA Telegraph*	"Sylvias"	
	"Metropolis"	
	"George Mason"	
Madison *WI Democrat*	"Republic"	
Milledgeville (GA) *Federal Union*	---	
Natchez *MS Free Trader*	"WXY"	
New Orleans *Picayune*	"Le Diable Boiteux"	Alexander C. Bullitt *
New York Commercial Advertiser	"M"	Charles March **
New York Courier and Enquirer	"Veritas"	James Harvey
	"Volunteer"	
New York Evangelist and Presbyterian	---	
New York Express	"Juvenal"	N.W. Adams
	"A Looker On and Laugher"	

	"E.B."	Erastus Brooks
	"Spectator"	
	"Lacon"	
	"F.V."	
New York Globe	"John Taylor of Caroline"	William D. Wallach
New York Herald	"The Doctor"/---	George B. Wallis

	"J.A.S."	Joseph A. Scoville
	"Pozzi di Borgo"	Francis Grund
	"Patrick Henry"	
	"Reis Effendi"	
	"Jacob"	
	"Alexander"	
	"Rabelais"	
New York Journal of Commerce	---	
New York Post	"X"	Charles March **
New York Sun	"W"	Francis Grund
New York Tribune	"J.S.P."	James S. Pike
	"S.P.A."	Stephen P. Andrews
	"S"	
	"Sigma"	
	"A New Yorker"	
	"H.G."	Horace Greeley
	"Clio"	
Newark Advertiser	---	
Norfolk American Beacon...	---	
Oshkosh Democrat	"Northman"	
Philadelphia Cummings' Telegraphic Bulletin	"Henrico"	John E. Tuel *
Philadelphia North American...	"Independent"	James Harvey
Philadelphia PA Inquirer...	"Scrutator"	
Philadelphia Pennsylvanian	---	John W. Forney
	"Examiner"	William Curran **
	"Z"	
Philadelphia Post	"Grace Greenwood"	Sara Jane Clarke (Lippincott)
Philadelphia Public Ledger	"Observer"	Francis Grund
Pittsburgh Gazette	"Junius"	
Portland Advertiser	"J.S.P."	James S. Pike
Raleigh Register...	"Marion"	
Richmond Enquirer	"W.F.R."	William F. Ritchie
Richmond Republican	"Franklin"	Francis Grund *

Richmond Times	"W.C.C."	William C. Carrington

Rochester Advertiser	"V"	
Rochester American	"L"	
St. Louis Intelligencer / New Era	---	James Harvey
San Francisco Alta California	"E.G."	Edward Gilbert
Savannah Georgian	"Oglethorpe"	
Victoria Texian Advocate	"Lone Star"	
Wilmington (NC) Commercial	"Roanoke"	

* Probable Identification

** Possible Identification

CS

With Respect and Admiration—
Walter Mason Camp, Journalist of the Little Big Horn

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ABSTRACT

With Respect and Admiration—

Walter Mason Camp, Journalist of the Little Big Horn

Historian Robert M. Utley has observed that "Few events in American history have caught the public fancy so forcibly as the Custer disaster; few have inspired such intensity of interest and argument; and few have been more clouded by the producers of legend and debate."

During the national centennial year of 1876, newspapers, handicapped by the era's limited technology, were slow in breaking the news of the crushing defeat and death of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer at the Little Big Horn River on June 25. The only news reporter covering Custer's regiment, Mark H. Kellogg of the *Bismarck, Dakota Territory, Tribune*, had died with him. Kellogg's successors proved less than thorough in their pursuit of the story behind the story of the Little Big Horn clash. Instead, with their pens they created a broad canvass of imagined action that supported the country's need to believe that only through trickery and treachery could the Sioux and Cheyenne have brutally butchered the valiant men of the 7th U. S. Cavalry. Essential questions about what happened, combined with the elusive nature of determining how and why it happened, went undeveloped. In turn, as Utley suggests, the Little Big Horn fight grew to epic proportions beyond its own historical significance.

If the press after 1876 may be faulted for its failure to investigate the battle's facts more thoroughly, at least Walter Mason Camp, a civil engineer by training, an editor for a railroad industry magazine by occupation, and an oral historian par excellence, stepped forward in the early 1900s to rescue history from its blindness as much as any single person could. Camp meticulously, often on his own time, sought to record as much detail about the Little Big Horn battle and numerous other engagements of the Indian Wars as he could. Significantly, he investigated the battle by going to, or corresponding with, the still living sources, both white and Indian. The Camp Field

Notes constitute an important research source not only for the Little Big Horn battle but for other engagements of the Indian Wars. As one researcher said about Camp, "He was a trailblazer in his zeal to record the facts of history from the people who had witnessed that history."

With Respect and Admiration—

Walter Mason Camp, Journalist of the Little Big Horn

Historian Robert M. Utley has observed that "Few events in American history have caught the public fancy so forcibly as the Custer disaster; few have inspired such intensity of interest and argument; and few have been more clouded by the producers of legend and debate."[1]

As any number of writers have pointed out, Custer surpasses his historical reality to live on in myth and legend.[2] Linenthal notes that "Veneration of Custer and the martyrs of the 7th cavalry began almost immediately after the battle with their transformation into mythological figures: creators and saviors."[3] That he would gain such immortal stature was acknowledged quite early, almost as soon as news about the battle broke in the nation's newspapers. The *New York Herald* on July 12, 1876, observed, "The story that comes to us today with so much horror, with so much pathos, will become part of our national life."[4] And so it has.

Indeed, at times, it seems as if everyone knows that in his last battle, on June 25, 1876, Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer did die, and some 260 men of his 7th U.S. Cavalry perished with him during their ill-advised attack on a combined Plains Indian village whose inhabitants probably included between 2,000 and 4,000 highly skilled warriors.[5] As Linenthal points out, "More than a century later most Americans have some inkling of the epic drama that took place in the Montana hills, but the questions how and why will continue to entrance generations of Custerphiles."[6]

I might add that the epic drama that took place in Montana is well known around the world, as both of the key organizations of Custer buffs—the Custer

Battlefield Historical & Museum Association and the Little Big Horn Associates—draw members from a dozen or more countries. The surest way to launch an argument among these students of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, both amateur and academic, is simple: Ask who was the best or most important scholar of the 1876 battle.

Many names vie for the honor: Early researchers/writers included Col. William Graham, Charles Kuhlman and E.A. Brininstool. A successor group offered Edgar Stewart and J.W. Vaughn. In recent decades, the works of Don Rickey, Ken Hammer, John Gray, John M. Carroll, Lawrence Frost and Bob Utley have stood out. The latter remains active in today's crowded field of significant writers who include Jerry Greene, Paul Hutton, Brian Dippie, Paul Hedren, Jim Willert, Richard Hardorff, Brian Pohanka, Doug Scott and Richard Fox.

Recently, archeologist-historian Fox has attracted the most comment because of the innovative battle theories he offered in his 1993 book, Archaeology, History and Custer's Last Battle, but even he bows to the memory of another researcher, who, sadly, never completed a book of his own about the Little Big Horn. In his book's dedication, Fox writes: "With respect and admiration, this volume is dedicated to the memory of Walter Mason Camp."[7]

If Camp appears a surprising choice for "best researcher," it's because he's a hard man to pin down. An engineer by training, he spent the greater part of his working years as a journalist editing a railroad magazine, but in his spare time, he devoted himself to a mission of history, as an oral historian unraveling the mysteries of the Little Big Horn. Historical consultant Pohanka says, "Camp was far and away the single most important historian of the Little Big Horn—a very great man to whom all of us owe a great debt."[8]

This paper will take a closer look at this largely unheralded journalist —Walter Mason Camp of the Chicago *Railway Review* magazine who spent a considerable period of his life amassing the largest collection of primary research information about the battle between Custer and his Indian foe at the Little Big Horn River. We'll also examine why, despite some 25 years of research, Camp failed to complete his long-cherished goal of writing a book about the battle.

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During the national centennial year of 1876, newspapers, handicapped by the era's limited technology, were slow in breaking the startling news of the crushing defeat and death of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer at the Little Big Horn River. The only news reporter covering Custer's regiment, Mark H. Kellogg of the *Bismarck, Dakota Territory, Tribune*, had died with him. Kellogg's successors proved less than thorough in their pursuit of the story behind the story of the Little Big Horn clash. Instead, with their pens they created a broad canvass of imagined action that supported the country's need to believe that only through trickery and treachery could the Sioux and Cheyenne have brutally butchered the valiant men of the 7th U.S. Cavalry.[9] Essential questions about what happened, combined with the elusive nature of determining how and why it happened, went undeveloped. In turn, the combat at the Little Big Horn grew to epic proportions beyond its own historical significance.

If the press after 1876 may be faulted for its failure to investigate the battle's facts more thoroughly, at least Camp stepped forward in the early 1900s to rescue history from its blindness as much as any single person could. As Kenneth Hammer and Dennis Rowley wrote about Camp:

> Armed with a tireless pen, an intense burning interest in the western Indian wars, an indefatigable will, and not least, a railroad pass, he quietly and doggedly established a legacy for himself and those he interviewed that will live forever in the annals of American Indian history.[10]

For more than 25 years, Camp, "a quiet, unassuming man,"[11] devoted his non-railroad hours to poking into the fight between the 7th U.S. Cavalry and its Indian foe. For much of the 70 years since his death in 1925, his seeking for the truth went under-appreciated by many students of the battle. Thanks to Hammer's classic study of Camp's research notes two decades ago, Camp's name sounds vaguely familiar to many people today — sometimes in an odd way.[12] A few years ago, after a talk about the Little Big Horn battle, this writer was asked who was this "Mr. Camp Notes."

Understandably, those who study the Little Big Horn may lose sight of the man behind his notes. Camp the man proved all too human in one important, and regrettable, fashion. Always one more fact beckoned to him and lengthened his quest. So he forever delayed writing down his own battle interpretation. As historian Don Rickey says, "Camp didn't do enough writing. All he did was collect facts."[13]

If so, was Camp a significant researcher or merely an early Custer buff pursuing his hobby of collecting Little Big Horn lore? Camp probably under-appreciated his own work. In a 1920 speech to the Order of the Indian Wars, he termed himself merely "a student and a trail hunter."[14] Camp was born April 21, 1867, at Camptown, Pa., to Civil War veteran Treat Bosworth Camp and Hannah A. Brown. According to an overview of his life, Camp "gave little hint that he was to become a major gatherer of information on America's Indian Wars. He seemed clearly destined to become exactly what he did become, a highly competent civil engineer, specializing in railroad construction and maintenance."[15]

In his youth, he worked on farms and in the forests. By age 16, he was a trackwalker for the Lehigh Valley Railroad, his first job in what stretched into a 42-year career in railroading. In 1891, he completed his studies in civil engineering at Pennsylvania State College. In the years that followed, he held a variety of posts: surveyor in Fresno, Calif.; draftsman in San Francisco for the Southern Pacific Railway; construction engineer, then superintendent of operations for the Rainier Avenue Electric Railway in Seattle; and various positions for the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railway. In 1895, Camp was a graduate student in electrical and steam engineering at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and in 1896, taught in the National School of Electricity in Chicago.

Finally, in 1897, Camp, a journalist by experience, if not by training, began a 25-year career in Chicago as engineering editor of the *Railway and Engineering Review* (later the *Railway Review*). Reportedly, he never failed to deliver his weekly column in more than 25 years of writing it.[16]

Fulfilling that role would have been career enough for most men. As Rowley and Broadhurst point out, "As a writer Walter Camp commanded the respect of the railroad fraternity. He had a thorough knowledge of the practical side of railroading, and knew railroad conditions and needs."[17] During his tenure, "he became an authority on rail construction and maintenance, and his Notes on Track became a college textbook."[18] The depth of his knowledge impressed those who knew him. As one said, "He was the best informed man I ever knew."[19]

Yet Camp possessed interests wider than railroad matters. For many years he owned a 240-acre dairy farm at Lake Village, Ind. More important to history, Camp focused his avocational energies on Indian life and customs, the Indian Wars and, especially, the Battle of Little Big Horn. Possessing a journalistic style as meticulous as any modern reporter's, Camp investigated the Little Big Horn wherever facts might be found and tracked down the still living sources, both white and Indian.[20] He supplemented his field interviewing by corresponding with many battle veterans. "He was a trailblazer in his zeal to record the facts of history from the people who had witnessed that history," Hammer notes.[21]

During Camp's vacations as well as during his frequent travels for his railroad magazine, he visited some 40 battlefields and interviewed probably 200 survivors of various western battles. Initially, he focused on Custer's last fight against the Sioux and Cheyenne, but eventually he broadened his research to include such engagements as Custer's Battle at the Washita in 1868, Col. Ranald Mackenzie's raid on Dull Knife's village in Wyoming in 1876, Lt. Frank Baldwin's fight with Sitting Bull on Redwater Creek, Mont., in 1876, the Nez Perce Campaign of 1877, and the death of Sitting Bull and the battle at Wounded Knee in 1890. That many of these events had occurred during his impressionable youth may explain his quest for information.

His correspondence with numerous people, including Custer's widow, Elizabeth B. Custer, Gen. E.S. Godfrey and First Sgt. John Ryan, makes clear that he was a "Custer man." For example, in a May 19, 1920, response to Godfrey, Camp apologetically tells him that:

> "You think my remarks unfair to General Custer where I say, in connection with the fighting of August, 1873, that 'on both of these occasions Custer was looking for trouble,' etc. I have

> written to Colonel Walcutt to eliminate those words and all that follow them in that paragraph, as I know that your judgment is superior to mine in such matters, and I do not want to do any injustice to General Custer or his memory."[22]

Clearly, Camp was more interested in unraveling the facts of the battle than in picking apart Custer's own reputation. In July 1920, he told Mrs. Custer:

> "I think I have had a pretty good outline of the gossip and scandal that were current in the 7th Cavalry in the days of the Pioneer West, but that is not history. As for General Custer, I have often remarked that I considered him one of the most useful officers who campaigned against Indians, and that impression is what really counts in the historical sense. What history wants to know is the service which men performed, and this opinion of mine has been well supported by my interviews with such men as General Godfrey, Colonel Varnum and General Edgerly."[23]

His last comment to her on this subject may be most revealing: "What I have heard about the affairs of the 7th Cavalry that I do not intend to write about for publication would make a big book."

Camp never made clear what ignited his interest in the Little Big Horn or other Indian Wars engagements. However, that same letter to Mrs. Custer may have provided a glimpse into his motivation:

> "This battlefield site is the shrine of all the West. The fact that the Indian life of the Plains has passed, or is passing, away makes it all the more so. This landmark belongs to the heroic. Here the Indian power of the plains attained its utmost strength, and here

> it won its last victory. From that moment it began to decline, and in the short space of but a few years it had dwindled to a state of helplessness. The supreme sacrifice of General Custer and his brave men was made at this turning point."

At the outset of his research, Camp envisioned writing a book titled History of the 7th U.S. Cavalry. In 1908, in writing to John Ryan, who as first sergeant of Company M, 7th U.S. Cavalry, had survived the Little Big Horn, Camp summed up his purpose:

> "For five years I have been engaged at leisure times gathering matter for a history of the Little Big Horn campaign. I have the co-operation of more than 30 surviving officers and enlisted men of the 7th Cavalry...I have been on the Custer battlefield and on both of the Reno battlefields several times, and have surveyed and mapped them...I have interviewed Indians on the reservations who fought against Custer and against you fellows on the hill."

He also outlined his plans for his book:

> "In this book the enlisted men will receive attention as well as the officers, and I am therefore calling upon all hands to assist me with information in order that the history may be as accurate as possible."[24]

Camp probably began roaming America's back paths as early as 1904 searching for battle survivors, Indian and soldier, to interview and he continued until about 1920. However, his busiest period for interviews fell between 1908 and 1914. His letter writing also began early and continued throughout his active period of research. Hammer and Rowley described Camp's three-part methods as "simple but effective.[25]

- Find the desired person.

Hammer and Rowley note that Camp was unceasing in his quest. For example, on one occasion he reportedly hired a horse and wagon for a trek of many miles to interview one Indian at Interior, S.D. Camp told Mrs. Custer that on another occasion he spent eight hours discussing with Gen. W.S. Edgerly the movement that Company D under Capt. Thomas Weir and then-Lieutenant Edgerly made to today's Weir Point.[26] Writing to Camp, battle survivor Lt. Charles A. Varnum suggested that Camp's "history of the battle and all that led up to it ought to be very perfect for you certainly have run down every clue to information on the subject very carefully...."[27]

- Ask questions.

Camp relied on questionnaires to gather information by mail. The one he sent to Ryan in 1908 consisted of nine tightly constructed questions keyed especially to specific battle events that he expected Ryan would know about.[28]

- Record the answers.

Large portions of Camp's research papers today may be found in collections at several repositories, including Brigham Young University, Indiana University-Bloomington, the Denver Public Library, the University of Colorado-Boulder and Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.[29] Reviewers of Camp's materials suspect he never bought paper or owned a notebook. Instead, scraps of paper, envelopes, even matchbooks—all served to record his scribblings about some aspect of a battle or participant. He apparently followed no system of organization.[30] As a result, persons using Camp's notes face a veritable jigsaw puzzle grasping exactly what they are viewing. Hammer and Rowley point out that "He wrote in pencil and remarkably, the notes are still legible. He wrote clearly and firmly in a very readable style." Other researchers offer less praise of his handwriting.[31]

Camp wasn't satisfied with merely talking to or corresponding with the veterans. He felt compelled to walk where they had fought. Through his countless visits to battle sites, Camp developed his expertise. For example, through his efforts a marker was emplaced in the Wolf Mountains to note where Custer's command crossed the divide to follow Reno Creek to the Little Big Horn. As he told Mrs. Custer, "One cannot form an adequate idea of just what the situation was that confronted General Custer that Saturday night and Sunday morning without being on the ground."[32]

Unfortunately, Camp's gathering of facts ended all too abruptly. Only 58 years old, he died Aug. 3, 1925, at Kankakee, Ill. In his last few years, he wrote a series of letters to George Bird Grinnell, historian of the Cheyenne, that heretofore have been overlooked. These letters not only suggest why Camp never finished his book but also reveal his deep frustration at his inability to complete this long-cherished task.[33] In 1912, Camp and his wife, Emeline, bought their dairy farm in northwest Indiana, 55 miles from their Chicago home, intending it as a retirement place. For many years, they hired men to toil for them, but by the early 1920s, an economic downturn forced many farm workers, including those of the Camps, to head for better-paying jobs in the cities.

"In consequence," he told Grinnell in October 1923, "I had to get a leave of absence from my editorial job and come down here and attend to the farm myself."

The Camps wanted out, he said, but economic conditions prevented that. "So I am stuck as a farmer until we can sell out." Significantly, he added, "I am all but out of the journalistic job, as I am now writing only weekly editorials. If I can sell the farm I shall quit journalism altogether and look for something that has less routine."

On countless occasions, Camp had criss-crossed the West on his research mission, but his last had occurred in 1920. This 1923 letter reveals his longing to head west again, a point that became even more clear 13 months later in a November 1924 letter:

> "Am now making improvements (to the farm) and hope to be able to sell it before another year. If I can do that I will be in good shape to go to work again on my western studies. I have in mind to take an auto truck + go west for a trip of six months or longer just as soon as I can get free from this farm work, which I care nothing about."

This letter makes his deep frustration quite evident:

> "As long as I was with the Review I could get no time for historical writing, by reason of so much traveling. So I have never done anything toward putting my Army book in shape for publication."

Sadly, he never found that time as he died nine months later. The preciseness of his engineering training looms unmistakably in his final, deeply personal entry written in his diary just hours before his death:

> "At St. Mary's Hospital. General condition improving. Passed 67 ounces of urine in 24 hours. A little rain last night. Did not sleep as well as I should. Weather fair. Getting warmer. Soreness in limbs not quite as acute today."[34]

In an Aug. 11, 1925, letter, Dr. B.F. Uran related the circumstances of Camp's death to Emeline, who apparently had not been with him at the farm: "Mr. Camp seemingly was doing splendidly and his sudden taking away was a great surprise to me and the hospital authorities."[35]

Uran said he left Camp "in fine spirits" about 11 o'clock that morning after promising that he probably could go home within the week. But that afternoon Camp was conversing "in a very earnest and interesting way" with two other patients in a sun parlor, when "suddenly he began to breath laboredly (sic). A nurse was nearby and rushed to lay him on the floor but he expired before it could be accomplished."

A flyer promoting sale of Camp's book collection suggested he may have been farther along on his book than his 1924 letter to Grinnell indicated. It said:

> "At the time of his death, he had, ready for the press, a biography of General Custer, describing in detail his expeditions against the Indians, which would have been accorded a place among the foremost Americana items. He had, however, forgone its publication at the request of Mrs. Custer who desired that it not be published until after her death."[36]

Other than an introduction, no manuscript has ever been seen. While today Camp's work has gained him greater renown than he had in life, his research did not go unnoticed by other early Custer battle researchers in the period soon after his death. Barely six weeks after Camp died, Grinnell wrote his widow a letter that offered two paragraphs of condolences and three longer paragraphs that underscored the importance of her husband's research.

"I feel that it would be a public misfortune if all the work that he did in gathering this material should be lost," he told her. "The matter ought to be saved, and Mr. Camp ought to receive the credit for the great amount of time, labor and money that he expended in bringing it together."

Grinnell, somewhat surprisingly, suggested that the material "has, of course, no money value, but it has a very great historical value and ought to be saved." In concluding his letter, he told her that "in the death of your husband America has suffered a real loss."[37]

Mrs. Camp apparently replied to Grinnell on Sept. 19, 1925, and according to his response of Sept. 23, she indicated that she faced "difficulties" in the aftermath of her husband's death. Grinnell reassured her, at least about the Camp collection:

> "These matters will be hard to attend to, but, on the other hand, they will distract your thoughts from the great sorrow that you are bearing. I hope that as time progresses and you get further ahead in carrying on this work, you will let me hear from you. There are a number of people interested in the work set on foot by Mr. Camp, who are very anxious to see it carried forward."[38]

Others anxious about his collection soon appeared and many would remain visible for more than seven years. In May 1926, George B. Utley of Chicago's Newberry Library wrote Mrs. Camp that "much, if not all (of the collection), would be highly desirable for our Indian collection," and he asked her to consider donating or selling the material to his facility.[39] A year later, Lt. Col. C.A. Bach of the Army War College's Historical Section made a similar request, praising her husband's judgment and ability and offering his belief that "the information he gathered concerning Indian operations and activities had real historical value."[40]

Despite such appeals, Mrs. Camp retained her husband's vast collection, even after setting a price of $5,000 for it.[41] Eventually, the dogged efforts of such men as Robert S. Ellison, who was an avid collector of Western Americana and one-time chairman of the Historical Landmark Commission of Wyoming, Brig. Gen. William Carey Brown and Grinnell assured that

Camp's papers were preserved. In 1933, at the height of the Depression, Emeline Camp finally sold—for only $500—a large portion of her husband's papers to Ellison through Brown, who acted as his agent. While that was a considerable sum for that period, today his papers would demand top dollar from collectors.

Unfortunately for modern scholars, Camp's collection is scattered about the country in public and private hands. How that came to be is itself an interesting sidebar to the Little Big Horn story. While Brown had possession of the papers at his Denver home, he may have attempted to sort them, although Ken Hammer says he didn't find the documents well organized during his review in the early 1970s.[42] At one point, Brown apparently determined the materials he had weighed 50 pounds.[43]

Between 1933 and 1937, Brown gradually transferred the papers to Ellison.[44] Other researchers, including Charles Kuhlman, author of Legend Into History: The Custer Mystery, also had access to the notes. After Ellison's death in 1947, many of his papers, especially related to Abraham Lincoln but including a portion of the Camp materials, were presented to the Lilly Library at Indiana University. In 1967, under provisions of Mrs. Ellison's will still more material was transferred to the I.U. facility. Another large segment of Camp materials was acquired by the Harold B. Lee Library at BYU, beginning in 1968, and a smaller segment went to the Denver Public Library. Hammer edited the materials at BYU for publication in his 1976 book, Custer in '76.

Yet another set of Camp notes surfaced in the mid-1980s as an indirect result of battlefield archeological projects. After Camp's death, the Kenneth Roberts' family moved in with Mrs. Camp to help her care for her invalid sister. In a closet sat another five boxes of papers, including photographs, which the sister gave to the Roberts after Mrs. Camp's death. Naomi Roberts, whose married name was Dettmar, apparently was the only family member with an interest in history so she retained the boxes. By coincidence, she settled in Manitou Springs, Col., where in 1944 Ellison was mayor.

"People tried to buy parts of her collection over the years, but she wouldn't sell them piecemeal," says John Husk of Denver, who participated in the archeological projects. After Mrs. Dettmar saw him featured in news accounts of the battlefield digs, she contacted him.[45] Through his efforts, she donated her Camp materials in 1986 to the National Park Service archives at then-Custer Battlefield National Monument in Montana. As noted, another Camp segment reportedly remains today in private hands and portions may be published soon.

Despite being scattered among various research centers, major segments of Camp's papers, including those at BYU, I.U. and Little Bighorn Battlefield, are indexed and attract scholars and casual researchers alike. Hammer and Rowley summed up the importance of Camp's work this way:

> "Amidst the controversy that has swirled around the memory of Custer and his "last stand," embroiling literally hundreds of writers and collectors, Camp's notes appear as a welcome beacon. Among the dozens of interviews, all of them valuable and irreplaceable, are many that will be of more than passing interest to scholars and collectors."[46]

From Camp, researchers can glean small facts that enlighten almost any aspect of the Little Big Horn battle or its personalities. For example, in a letter at BYU, John Ryan revealed that he had written a 650-page manuscript on his Civil War and 7th Cavalry military careers.[47] Often, a major issue is addressed in the Camp materials. In another letter, Ryan casts doubt on rumors that Custer committed suicide. Ryan, who had charge of the detail that buried

Custer on June 28, 1876, closely viewed the body of his slain commanding officer: "In regard to the rumor that Custer shot himself, I do not think he ever did such a thing, nor do I believe that anybody knows who shot him."[48]

The Camp Field Notes have become arguably the single most important body of research materials for anyone seeking to learn about Custer's battle with the Sioux and Cheyenne or other Indian fights. As Hammer and Rowley stated:

> "Camp's notes do not begin to allay all of the many controversies surrounding Custer and the Little Bighorn. In general, however, they help to lay to rest most of the questions about who was where. The significance of Camp's work will no doubt grow...."[49]

Endnotes

[1] Utley, Robert M. Custer and the Great Controversy (Pasadena, Calif.: Westernlore Press, 1980), p. 14.

[2] Several books stand out on this point. Besides the aforementioned book by Robert Utley, the reader's attention is called to the following titles: Dippie, Brian W., Custer's Last Stand: The Anatomy of an American Myth (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); Slotkin, Richard, The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of industrialization, 1800-1900 (New York: Atheneum, 1985); and Linenthal, Edward Tabor, Sacred Ground: Americans and their Battlefields (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994) and Changing Images of the Warrior Hero in America: A History of Popular Symbolism (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982).

[3] Linenthal, Sacred Ground, p. 131.

[4] *New York Herald*, July 12, 1876.

[5] Underscoring Custer's lingering hold on popular culture in the mid-1990s, as this paper was being completed in late April, the character of Custer was to be featured in two television shows, the regular CBS series "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman" and a special ABC mini-series, "Buffalo Girls."

[6] Linenthal, Sacred Ground, p. 128.

[7] Fox, Richard A., Archaeology, History and Custer's Last Battle (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), Dedication.

[8] "An Interview with Brian C. Pohanka," Newsletter (Brooklyn, N. Y.: Little Big Horn Associates, March 1995), p. 4-5.

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[9] Historian Robert M. Utley, in his book, Custer and the Great Controversy (Pasadena, Calif.: Westernlore Press, 1980), referred to press coverage of the 1876 battle as "muddled." Utley's book should be consulted for more understanding of the effects of press coverage on the Custer myth.

[10] Hammer, Kenneth, and Rowley, Dennis, "Custer's Man Camp, Oral Historian Without Peer," Manuscripts Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (Tyler, Texas, Spring 1975), pp. 112-120.

[11] Rowley, Dennis, and Broadhurst, Neil, A Register of the Walter Mason Camp Papers, Mss. 57 (Provo, Utah: Archives and Manuscripts, Special Collections, H. B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, 1981), p. 2.

[12] See Hammer, Kenneth, ed., Custer in '76 (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1976).

[13] Conversation with author, Aug. 5, 1994, Billings, Mont.

[14] Proceedings of the Annual Meeting and Dinner of the Order of Indian Wars of the United States Held January 17, 1920. Washington, D. C. 38 pp., 1920. Quoted in Hammer, Custer in '76, p. 10.

[15] Rowley, Broadhurst, A Register, p. 4.

[16] Hammer, Rowley, "Custer's Man Camp," p. 114.

[17] Rowley, Broadhurst, A Register, p. 5.

[18] Hammer, Custer in '76, p. 2.

[19] The Railway Review, Aug. 8, 1925, p. 197.

[20] He reportedly had a limited ability to speak Sioux and other Indian languages. Brown, William C., "Records of Indian War History," undated newspaper clipping, Camp Collection, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Crow Agency, MT.

[21] Hammer, Custer, p. 2.

[22] Camp to Godfrey, May 19, 1920, Elizabeth Bacon Custer Collection, LBBNM.

[23] Camp to Elizabeth B. Custer, July 15, 1920, EBC Collection, LBBNM.

[24] Camp to Ryan, Nov. 19, 1908. Camp Collection, Lee Library, BYU.

[25] Hammer, Rowley, "Custer's Man Camp," p. 115.

[26] Camp to Elizabeth B. Custer, Oct. 4, 1920, EBC Collection, LBBNM.

[27] Varnum Correspondence, Camp Collection, Lee Library, BYU.

[28] Author Gregory Michno in his 1994 book, The Mystery of E Troop (Missoula, Mont.: Mountain Press Publishing Co.) criticizes Camp for asking leading questions, especially of Indians, that led to answers consistent with his own developing interpretation of the events of June 25-26, 1876.

[29] Additional Camp-related documents, principally correspondence, may be found in smaller numbers in other public collections or in private collections.

[30] Writing June 28, 1922, to George Bird Grinnell, Camp revealed that he apparently kept a card catalog of his reference materials. George Bird Grinnell Collection, Southwest Museum Library, Los Angeles.

[31] Hammer, Rowley, "Custer's Man Camp," p. 115.

[32] Camp to Elizabeth B. Custer, Aug. 19, 1919, Camp Collection, LBBNM.

[33] The letters are part of the George Bird Grinnell Collection, Southwest Museum Library, Los Angeles.

[34] Diary of Walter Mason Camp, Aug. 3, 1925. Diary is in the possession of John Husk, Englewood, CO.

[35] Dr. B. F. Uran to Mrs. Walter M. Camp, Aug. 11, 1925. Letter is in the possession of John Husk.

[36] "The Private Library of Walter M. Camp," Flyer, Camp Collection, LBBNM.

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[37] George Bird Grinnell to Mrs. Walter M. Camp, Sept. 15, 1925. Letter is in the possession of John Husk.

[38] The whereabouts or existence of Mrs. Camp's letter of Sept. 19, 1925, is unknown, but Grinnell's Sept. 23, 1925, letter is in Husk's possession.

[39] Utley to Mrs. Camp, May 29, 1926, Camp Collection, LBBNM.

[40] Bach to Mrs. Camp, Jan. 21, 1927, Camp Collection, LBBNM.

[41] Author's interview with Ken Hammer, Greendale, Wisc., Nov. 19, 1994.

[42] Author's interview with Hammer, Nov. 19, 1994.

[43] Brown, William C., "The W. M. Camp Records of Indian War History," undated record, The Ken Hammer Collection, Box 4, LBBNM; Letter to Mrs. Camp, June 27, 1933, Camp Collection, LBBNM.

[44] Letter from Bruce R. Liddic, Syracuse, N. Y., to the author, Dec. 29, 1994. Liddic has edited private Camp materials for publication in 1995. In this private collection, Liddic reviewed numerous letters by Mrs. Camp, Brown, Ellison and others that may shed additional light on efforts to pry loose the notes from the widow. However, the owner of this material has not made it available to other researchers. Liddic told the author that a 1937 letter from Brown to Ellison made clear that all the material had been transferred to Ellison by that time.

[45] Telephone interview with John Husk, March 31, 1993.

[46] Hammer, Rowley, "Custer's Man Camp," p. 117.

[47] Ryan to Camp, Nov. 29, 1908. Much of the segment about his 10 years with the 7th Cavalry was published in 1908-09 in his hometown newspapers in Newton, Mass., but the Civil War portion remains missing. Camp Collection, Lee Library, BYU.

[48] Ryan to Camp, Dec. 17, 1908. In 1885, Ryan interviewed Sitting Bull, when Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show played in Boston. Ryan's description of the one wound going through Custer's body from right to left is inaccurate. Most experts believe Custer was shot on his left side. Camp Collection, Lee Library, BYU.

[49] Hammer, Rowley, "Custer's Man Camp," p. 120.

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Domesticity and Municipal Housekeeping Concerns in the Writing of Women Journalists during the Nineteenth Century

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Domesticity and Municipal Housekeeping Concerns in the Writing of Women Journalists during the Nineteenth Century

This paper uses examples of the writing of newspaper women throughout the nineteenth century to argue that there was a tradition among women writers to publicize important social issues and reform activities. These stories indicate that women writers throughout the nineteenth century ascribed to a tradition of writing about "municipal housekeeping" concerns, that is, the idea that a woman's place was in the home, but that the home was broader than the four walls that provided protection from the elements. These women believed that the home was the community and that it was woman's duty to clean up the cities and rid them of social ills in order to protect the home. Women writers also were affected by this widening of woman's sphere to include public responsibilities for women in their articles.

Domesticity and Municipal Housekeeping Concerns in the Writing of Women Journalists during the Nineteenth Century

The notorious Elizabeth Cochrane -- journalism's Nellie Bly -- wasn't the only nineteenth century woman journalist to expose the plight of the mentally ill on New York's Blackwell's Island. Cochrane's flamboyant style -- which called for her to feign insanity and have herself committed to the insane asylum -- certainly gained her a place in journalism history books. But, more than 40 years earlier, Margaret Fuller had journeyed across the river to Blackwell's Island as a writer for the New York Tribune to shed light on the horrors of conditions there. While Cochrane's style first opened the front page to women writers, Fuller's interest in social problems, including the plight of the poor, the handicapped and the disadvantaged, helped establish as far back as the 1840s the tradition that these were appropriate topics for women writers to explore. Although newspaper editors tended to keep any token woman on staff away from the rough-and-tumble reality of "hard news," evidence indicates that throughout the second half of the nineteenth century women were writing about social problems.

This paper uses the writing of newspaper women throughout the nineteenth century to argue that there was a tradition among women writers to publicize important social issues. These stories indicate that women writers throughout the nineteenth century ascribed to a tradition of writing about "municipal housekeeping" concerns. That is, the idea that a woman's place was in the home, but that the home was broader than the four walls that provided protection from the elements. These women believed that the home was the community and that it was woman's duty to clean up the cities and rid them of social ills in order to protect the home. This municipal housekeeping tradition can trace its roots to the prevailing nineteenth century ideal that the proper sphere for women was a domestic one. For as middle-class women came to terms with the importance of domesticity in their lives, they were constantly presented in magazines and newspapers with articles celebrating this ideal.

Domesticity and Women in the Nineteenth Century

Nineteenth century women often alluded to their sphere -- a reference to what was believed to be the proper role for women in society. These women, most especially of the middle class, were bound by the image of an ideal woman, fragile and gentle, who tended to her home and family and reveled in her own sphere of domestic life.[1] Historians have well documented the "Cult of Domesticity" that dictated the lives of American women in the nineteenth century. Women, especially those of the middle class, were relegated to a distinct domestic sphere. The roots of this concept are many. The Industrial Revolution sounded the death knell for cottage industries, and underscored the distinction between "home" and "work."[2] At the same time, factory production lightened the burden on women by mass producing necessities such as cloth and soap.[3] The urbanization of America meant fewer domestic chores in contrast to the responsibilities of farm life.

The rise of domestic help gave middle-class women leisure time. Women came to believe there was value in their domestic chores and adhered to the idea that theirs was domestic sphere because women were naturally morally superior to men. "The cult of domesticity created a new respect for the private sphere, and when certain of its exponents, male and female, began to carry domestic values outside the home, they also carried a rationale for private, 'indoors' people--that is, women--to be publicly active."[4] Thus, even before women crystallized the term "municipal housekeeping" to justify their forays into the public sphere, they used protection of the "home" and concerns for its integrity as a motivation to speak publicly about social problems.

Apropos to this foray into the public sphere (or actually just widening their private sphere) was the vision of public women, such as writer and educator Catharine Beecher, who believed the "home was an integral part of a national system" in which women concerned themselves with public roles when it was necessary to protect the home.[5] Women writers also were affected by this widening of woman's sphere to include public responsibilities. In her landmark article, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," Barbara Welter described how literature and women's magazines, especially the popular Godey's Lady's Book, celebrated this domestic sphere. As one author of the period explained, "[E]ven if we cannot reform the world in a moment, we can begin the work by reforming ourselves and our households--it is woman's mission. Let her not look away from her own little family circle for the means of producing moral and social reforms, but begin at home."[6] In her book, "Just a Housewife", historian Glenna Matthews documented how novels, magazines and even cookbooks celebrated this cult of domesticity and used it to justify a more public role for women to rectify the social problems that encroached and could threaten the home. As this paper demonstrates, newspapers also were affected.

Women and Newspapers in the Nineteenth Century

The involvement of women writers in newspapers began when editors in the mid-nineteenth century wanted to profit by luring women readers. As America became increasingly industrialized, women, especially those of the middle class, became shoppers for their families' goods. Newspaper editors wanted women to read newspapers because they realized that women could attract advertising dollars of department stores, which were themselves a new concept in mid-century.[7] By this time, more and more women had learned to read.[8] And, as literacy rates increased, technology eased the domestic burden of middle-class women so that many could actually find time to read. Because, even then, women were the major purchasers in the family, their allegiance to a daily newspaper could translate directly into increased advertising revenues from department stores.[9] Thus, newspaper editors and publishers wooed women readers. Newspapers started slowly, usually with a token column written by a woman and aimed at women, before eventually establishing women's pages as sections in most dailies. By 1900, the women's page had emerged as a distinct section in most newspapers, and copy was wrapped around bold advertisements for prominent department stores.

The attempt to capture women readers by mainstream newspapers actually began years earlier when Margaret Fuller was hired by Horace Greeley in 1844 to write for his New York Tribune. After Fuller, other women were hired at the large newspapers to write special columns and letters, often on a per article basis, on whatever topics appealed to them. These women columnists incorporated gossip, fashion, social reform and morality in their writing.

This trend began in response to the belief by publishers that women could be a profitable target audience. More than 25 publications aimed at women appeared by mid-century.[10] While magazines aimed at women thrived, newspapers had less success in convincing women to read their pages. In 1836, for example, William Newell decided to bring a feminine approach to news of the day in his Ladies Morning Star in New York. The publication, intended to be a "literary, moral newspaper," flopped.[11] After three months, circulation stood at 2,000, and there were virtually no advertisers. After six months, Newell dropped the word "Ladies" from the title because, he noted, advertisers refused to support such a specialized newspaper. The public loved sensational stories of murders and courtroom dramas of the day and the Star, which did not print them, folded.[12]

Margaret Fuller's Journalism

Horace Greeley launched a different experiment in 1844 involving women in journalism. Greeley believed Fuller was "mentally, the best instructed woman in America," but like other educated, yet unfulfilled, women of her day suffered physically from a "spinal affliction, nervous disorder and protracted, fearfully torturing headaches."[13] He claimed that excessive study had marred her youthful health. Greeley realized, however, that Fuller would be an asset to his newspaper and help it gain female readers.[14] In hiring Fuller as the Tribune's literary critic, Greeley was not taking a big risk because she was already an established writer.[15]

Greeley did not ask Fuller to write for women; he merely asked her to write in general, but some of her subjects were of particular interest to women. She soon demonstrated that a woman could succeed on a mainstream publication. She wrote literary criticisms with such brilliance that rival Edgar Allen Poe declared at one point that there were three classes of people: "Men, women and Margaret Fuller."[16]

Including her criticism, Fuller wrote about three articles a week. Like other women journalists after her, she was able to choose what she would write about and why. As she explained in a letter to her brother three months after she started work at the Tribune, her job was "entirely satisfactory." Noting that her work was "marked with a star" in the newspaper, Fuller told her brother that she selected her own assignments: "I do just as I please and as much or little as I please, and the Editors express themselves perfectly satisfied, and others say that my pieces tell to a degree I could not expect."[17]

The preponderance of the nearly 200 articles Fuller wrote between December 1844 and August 1846, when she left for Europe, contained literary criticism. There were, however, a significant number of articles on social problems. In editorials dubbed "Thanksgiving" and "Christmas," Fuller asked the Tribune's readers to remember those less fortunate than themselves. Greeley remembered after Fuller's death that she was keenly concerned with helping those in need. "For every effort to limit vice, ignorance, and misery she had a ready, eager ear, and a willing hand," he reminisced, adding that benevolent and reform associations benefited from publicity provided "from her pen during her connection with The Tribune."[18]

Fuller, for example, issued a plea for the civilized treatment of prisoners and the mentally ill in her "Thanksgiving" article. It was the first of many articles that focused on the plight of prisoners and the lower classes. Fuller visited such places as Sing Sing prison, the Bellevue Alms House, the Farm School, Blackwell's Island (where the mentally ill were sent) and the Bloomingdale Asylum for the Insane. She spoke with prostitutes, prisoners and the insane. Her articles often suggested remedies for the conditions portrayed. When she visited the Alms House, she proposed reforms. She suggested that residents learn to use books and also be practically educated "opening to a better intercourse than they can obtain from their miserable homes, correct notions to cleanliness, diet, and fresh air..."[19]

Fuller also established the technique, used so frequently by other women journalists, of filling her copy with anecdotes and examples of unfortunate individuals. In an article about charities in New York, she described, for example, the plight of a young Dutch girl who was a dwarf. The child had been abandoned by a showman who had brought her to New York. She used examples such as this waif to underscore her belief that social reform needed to be removed from politics. "Churches, Schools, Colleges, the care of the Insane, and suffering Poor, should be preserved from the uneasy tossings of this delirium...."[20] Other social reform articles included reports on her visit to the Asylum for Discharged Female Convicts, "The Social Movement in Europe," "The Wrongs of American Women," an examination of local schools and the conditions at the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, portraits of the ideal rich man and a contrasting vision of the ideal poor man.[21]

In an article about a "Woman in Poverty," Fuller described the "dignity and propriety" of an impoverished woman who took in a sick, homeless girl.[22] In an article about the "Asylum for Discharged Female Convicts," Fuller appealed to the rich to help the poor; she appealed to men to amend their attitude toward women. Most importantly, Fuller issued a plea to women to take pity on those who were feeble and morally weak. She urged women of her class to visit Blackwell's Island and the Hospital and

Penitentiary there to see the plight of the women and children. She appealed to women's maternal instincts to think when they saw these children about their own advantaged youths and to reach out to help the unfortunate. Thus, while she merely asked men to stop treating women unjustly, she urged fellow women to action. She urged them to get out of their homes and involve themselves in ameliorating the plight of the impoverished in her city.

These articles literally set the tone for what women could and would write about later in the century. Fuller set the pace for women's writing on social reform when she was given a free hand to pen articles on the plight of prostitutes, the conditions at the insane asylum on Blackwell's Island in New York and the prison at Sing Sing. Her articles focused not on her own adventures in going there (as the writing of Cochrane and the other "stunt girls" in the 1890s would) but on the plight of the inmates. Like other women writers who followed her, she believed in the equality of women.[23]

In spite of her gripping columns, Greeley found Fuller somewhat of a trial. Greeley and Fuller's relationship often was fraught with tension even through she lived with him and his family. She invariably missed deadlines and looked down on newspaper writing as plebeian. "What a vulgarity there seems in this writing for the multitude!" she lamented.[24]

Despite this tension, Greeley's experiment with a woman writer generally was considered a success. Greeley hired other women as columnists and gained a reputation as a New York editor sympathetic to women. Eventually other editors began printing regular letters or columns from established women writers. Usually these women never set foot in the newsroom, but wrote their articles in the privacy of their homes, delivered them to the news room and were paid for each item accepted.

After Fuller

Another trailblazer for women in journalism was Sara Payson Willis Parton, who chose the alliterative pen name "Fanny Fern." Born in 1811, she did not begin a career in journalism until she was 40 and her first husband had died and her second marriage ended in divorce.[25] She turned to writing and penned columns for the weekly New York Ledger.[26] While most of her columns dealt with the trials of every day life, she occasionally considered such topics as the "Woman Question" and other subjects that appealed to women.[27] Her work was exceedingly popular with readers. Parton's work was studied nearly 40 years ago by historian Elizabeth Bancroft Schlesinger as evidence that women were being encouraged in the mid-nineteenth century to expand their role in society. "Amid all her trivial chatter she encouraged women to think for themselves, to be more self-reliant and to seek wider fields of endeavor," Schlesinger wrote.[28] In fact, Schlesinger argued Parton possibly did as much to widen women's sphere as the "more celebrated leaders of the equal-right movement."[29] Yet, a comparison of her writing with other early women columnists shows that Parton was less concerned with women's sphere and increased responsibility for women than her colleagues. Nevertheless, Parton did promote the idea of equal pay for equal work and occasionally backed social reforms.

Many women columnists and correspondents in the mid-nineteenth century were established authors before being taken under the wing of a progressive newspaper editor who was in search of a token woman. Fuller, for example, had edited the transcendental publication Dial and associated with the likes of Emerson and Thoreau before Greeley invited her to join him in New York.[30] Jane Grey Swisshelm was an abolitionist with a national reputation when she broke down sex barriers in the Senate press gallery in 1850 as a correspondent for Greeley's Tribune. Greeley agreed to pay her five dollars a column for her correspondence from Washington.[31]

Bylines for Women

Editors wanted readers to know when women wrote articles. Women wrote under bylines, often using flowery pennames, at a time before bylines were common, and in a society in which it normally was taboo for a lady's name to appear in the newspaper.[32] Fuller, as has been noted, signed her writing with an asterisk. During the decade of the 1870s when Sara Clarke Lippincott wrote a column for the New York Times, her "Grace Greenwood" penname consistently was the only byline in the newspaper.[33] Under headlines of other Times' news articles, the line "Special dispatch to the Times" or "By our own Correspondent" appeared. Toward the end of the 1870s, the "Grace Greenwood" name was dropped to the bottom of the column and the words "from our special correspondent" appeared under the title. The Times obviously distinguished between the non-bylined news reports of its reporters and Lippincott's commentary.

Letters and columns written by some women, however, were signed with their real names. Swisshelm wrote letters for the Tribune, the Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter and the St. Cloud Democrat in Minnesota until 1865 under her own name. Mary Clemmer Ames wrote a signed column for the weekly New York Independent for nearly two decades, beginning about 1866.

Boston journalist Helen M. Winslow, who began her newspaper work in the 1880s, reminisced in 1905 that when she started a women's section her editor insisted that she sign her articles. She agreed, but then was upset because copy editors in the city department were "mutilating" her page. The managing editor conceded that the editors were upset because "you are getting a great deal of glory out of it and some of the men upstairs, who do good work but are not allowed to sign it, are jealous..."[34]

By using women's bylines, editors distanced themselves from women at the same time they opened their ranks to them. By marking the work of women with bylines, editors separated themselves and their regular fare from women's opinions. Also, by giving the women bylines, editors appealed to potential women readers by demonstrating that their publications did indeed have women as writers. It appeared that the earliest women's columns encountered "benign neglect," because editors let women write about what they fancied with little interference.[35]

Domesticity in Newspapers

Early women newspaper writers were generalists. They specialized in nothing but often touched on news and topics that would later be identified as women's news. An examination of representative writings of several columnists (Swisshelm, Lippincott, Parton, and Ames) showed, for example, that while each woman had a particular style unique to her, there was a certain similarity in the wide range of politics, gossip, fashion and reform that each broached. The wide berth given these women writers in subject matter set the tone for the second generation of women at newspapers. They did not write hard news, but selected topics presumed to be of interest to women -- most especially those dealing with fashion and reform. They also wrote about politics from a woman's perspective. Their columns were penned in the first person and combined description sprinkled generously with opinion. By 1900, this personal style of writing, noticeably absent from other sections of the newspaper at this time, was entrenched on the Sunday woman's page.

After the Civil War, the top stories of the day were transmitted by telegraph for timeliness, but articles from women appeared days after they were written, indicating that they probably were sent by mail. Articles by Swisshelm, whose columns from Washington, D.C., in the St. Cloud Democrat appeared in the form of letters to her nephew, who had succeeded her as editor, often appeared more than two weeks after they were written.[36]

Women's writing, as noted earlier, was extremely personal.

Swisshelm's first column from Washington to the St. Cloud Democrat, began: "Here I am, snug as a flea in a blanket in the great Capital of the once United States...."[37] Swisshelm's writing especially focused on areas that specifically could be designed as part of woman's sphere of the nineteenth century. Much of her writing during the Civil War dealt with the trials of black people and the horrors of slavery. Since slavery had immoral overtones, it was appropriate for women, who were assumed to have a higher moral character than men, to write against it. Acting in the role as moral arbiter, Swisshelm championed the cause of blacks, as did many middle-class women of the North. Yet, typical of middle-class women of her day, Swisshelm's sympathies did not extend to all people. After unhappy encounters with the Indians in Minnesota, she became staunchly in favor of sharp tactics to deal with the people she described as "simply a set of lazy, impudent beggars, affecting to despise the arts of civilized life."[38] She declared, "Exterminate the wild beasts and make peace with the devil and all his hosts sooner than with these red-jawed tigers whose fangs are dripping with the blood of innocents."[39] This type of prejudice, which surfaces in the writing of other women columnists, serves as a reminder that these women were not holier-than-thou do-gooders, but were simply middle-class women who had a forum to voice their opinions.

Swisshelm wrote about gossip, politics and fashion in her Civil War letters. She digressed in one letter from a heated discussion of the strength of the Union Army and a debate that ensued at a reception to a description of what the hostess wore: "For the benefit of the ladies, I must mention that she wore a very rich crimson moire antique, with black lace trimmings. The ladies present were generally richly dressed but many of them were disfigured by quillings or puffings which gave them, more or less, the appearance of french hens..."[40] It is apparent that Swisshelm was trying to make news appealing to women uninterested in political issues. Her letters also dealt with social concerns, a primary interest for middle-class women who were just becoming involved in voluntary activities to aid the Civil War effort. Swisshelm highlighted early municipal housekeeping/volunteer concerns. She wrote that she personally worked at a Union hospital in Washington "dressing wounds, wetting wounds, giving drinks and stimulants, comforting the dying, trying to save the living."[41] She pleaded in a column, which originally appeared in Greeley's Tribune, for women to assist in caring for the wounded: "I want whiskey -- barrels of whiskey -- to wash feet and thus keep up circulation in wounded knees, legs, thighs, hips. I want a lot of pickles, pickles, pickles, lemons, lemons, lemons, oranges. No well man or woman has a right to a glass of lemonade. We want it all in the hospitals to prevent gangrene."[42] She called for women volunteers to distribute drinks for the wounded. Thus, Swisshelm encouraged women to enlarge their sphere to include a more public, helping role.

Swisshelm's reform tendencies extended toward the hazards of urban living, which later became a focus of municipal housekeepers. She described the health hazards and unsanitary conditions of Washington, noting that the streets were littered "with dead horse, dead dogs, cats, rats, rubbish and refuse of all kinds...It appears to be a matter of national pride that the President is to have more mud, and blacker mud, and filthier mud in front of his door than any other man can afford."[43]

Her column, like the writing of other women, also served as a platform for the rights of women. Swisshelm argued that Washington was a terrible place for a pioneer movement in women's rights because it was a Southern city and a center of snobism.[44] It was impossible, she wrote, for men to deal with a woman clerk without making some reference to the fact that she was a woman. "The idea of treating them [women] as copyists and clerks, simply this and nothing more, is beyond the mental caliber of almost any man..."[45] In that same dispatch, she deplored the inequity of the system where there were "women working like horses, scarcely taking time for lunch,...some of them doing the same kind of work, and as much of it, as men at salaries of $1,200, $1,400 and $1,600 per annum, while they get $820."[46]

Mary Clemmer Ames' "Woman's Letter from Washington," appeared in the weekly New York Independent beginning in March 1866. Ames ascribed to the tenets of the separate spheres more rigorously than Swisshelm. In her column, Ames stated that a women writer who offended her public by appearing too forward would be criticized. Notoriety, she wrote, was a "curse which soils the loveliness of the womanly name by thrusting it into the grimy highway, where it is wondered at, sneered at, lied about, by the vulgar, the worldly and the wicked."[47]

Like Swisshelm, Ames believed that women's sphere should include reform, and she used her column to support the rights of women and other social causes. She decried the pay inequity in government service. She noted that men who passed an employment examination were awarded clerkships at a minimum pay of $1,200 while women were discriminated against by law. "The woman who passes triumphantly the severest intellectual test offered by the Government, cannot receive more than a nine-hundred-dollar position" because of a fixed stipend rule from Congress.[48] Ames railed against the attitude of congressmen, who were debating the merits of women's work. Although these men could be described as good men and husbands, she wrote, "their personal relations do not prevent them from placing a very low estimate upon the powers, performance, place and prospects of women in general."[49] Women's issues aside, Ames devoted fewer column inches to political issues than Swisshelm and placed a heavier emphasis on description of the Washington scene and literary commentary.

She was, however, a political commentator throughout the scandal-racked presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. What more appropriate role for a morally superior woman than to comment on immorality and bad government? Most often, though, her columns provided feature-story looks at the inner workings of government. She devoted space to the patent office, the dead letter office, the treasury, the interior department and the Smithsonian.

Decades later, features similar to Ames' work routinely appeared on women's pages. Features of this type may have generated women's interest in the working of government and may have laid the groundwork for women's involvement in the public sphere.

The "Grace Greenwood" penname first appeared in the Times in 1871.[50] By this time, Sara Clarke Lippincott already was an established writer whose work had appeared in such publications as National Era, an abolitionist newspaper, Home Journal magazine, and Godey's Lady's Book. For the Times, she traveled around the United States, commenting on the local scene. She arrived in Washington in 1873 and aired her own strong opinions about government throughout her column. "I find that I am charged with a lack of proper reverence for Congressmen," she wrote after only two months in Washington. She stated that the men whose job it was to screen people entering the public galleries in Congress had an unenviable job: "Better dwell in the tents of the Lord, than be a doorkeeper in the house of the Wicked."[51]

Lippincott's chatty columns reflected the hours she spent in the Senate and House galleries listening to debate. They reported what happened along with her opinions of the congressional actors and the content of debate. She, too, discussed the opening of jobs as government clerks to women in Washington, but cautioned her women readers against the "hard, monotonous, wearing work."[52] If, she speculated, she were in need of work, she would "teach a country school and board around and see the world," or, seek a "position as companion and novel-reader to a pious old lady, fond of gossip; or I would marry an eligible old gentleman or go on a mission to China..."[53]

Attacking corruption in government during the Credit Mobilier scandal, Lippincott argued that if, in fact, women had been in charge of government "what a yell of derision would have resounded from Maine to Georgia and from Boston to San Francisco, over woman's incapacity not only to legislate for others, but to take care of herself!"[54] Lippincott presented her views on the "woman question" in lectures along with giving them in her writing. Typical of other pioneer women journalists, she favored woman's suffrage and sought to protect the rights of women. When criticized for her political opinions, she said that she could cook and sew as well as any woman, but that "I confess I prefer...pricking with my pen 'the bubble reputation' of political charlatans to puncturing innocent muslin with my needle."[55] She left Washington in 1878 for Europe and, like Margaret Fuller, sent back columns during her travels.

Women and Reform

As the number of women journalists grew, the number of articles aimed at women also increased. Women hired to write for metropolitan newspapers were assigned projects considered appropriate for their gender. In 1886, Helen Campbell wrote a series of articles for the New York Tribune in which she chronicled the "Prisoners of Poverty" in New York. Campbell was an established author when she joined the Tribune, having written several children's books, a novel about a wealthy woman's forays to the slums, and magazine articles about life in New York's tenements. Campbell was a middle-class woman who aimed her Tribune articles at middle-class newspaper readers. The paper's Sunday edition had a circulation between 50,000 and 75,000 when her series appeared, so she reached a wide New York audience.

Campbell visited the city's poverty-stricken areas frequently to gather first-person accounts, touching melodramatic stories and vivid descriptions of life in poverty, especially as experienced by women and children.[56] Journalism historian Susan Henry noted that Campbell's articles mixed description with possible solutions to the cycle of poverty. When Campbell's articles ran in the Tribune, the editors followed an unusual tactic: They also published a commentary on Campbell's writing and often criticized her suggestions or solutions. The Tribune's comments noted that one main purpose of the series was to move readers to action (obviously by encouraging social reform activities among women). Typical of newspaper writing by women at this time, the series, which was published every Sunday for five months, never appeared on page one. In fact, the first article appeared on page 13.[57] Campbell's articles provided hard facts, such as economic data on salaries, and anecdotes that illustrated how individuals were touched by poverty.

Campbell believed it was the responsibility of the more fortunate to help ease conditions in New York slums. She charged that fashion-conscious women reaped the benefits of the labors of underpaid, overworked, exploited garment workers. As she explained it, care must be taken for "the woman stitching her remnant of life into the garments that by and by her more fortunate sisters will find on the bargain counter."[58] These same women, Campbell contended, also exploited domestic servants. Obviously, articles on these subjects were meant to move middle- and upper-class women to change their habits.

Because the Tribune's editors often disagreed with Campbell's opinions, they published disclaimers that effectively chastised her and berated her conclusions. For example, Campbell stated in the last article in her series that America's political and social systems actually encouraged exploitation and that "the best in socialism offers itself as the sole way of escape from the monopolies and stupidities of the present system."[59] But the Tribune responded that she was not well-advised and that her position was "most unreasonable and anomalous."[60] The newspaper editors also stated: "It is in no way a disparagement of the reporter's ability to say that she has been more successful in describing the actual conditions which call for reform than in proposing remedies."[61] Ironically, the editors assigned Campbell the series because she had insight and expertise in the area of New York's slums, but then dubbed her unqualified when she proposed solutions as an expert.

In Campbell's conclusion to "Prisoners of Poverty," she laid blame for poverty and the poor on the prosperous. She noted that the impoverished had less of a chance to escape their lives than pagans who were being converted by American missionaries. While her progressive suggestions were obviously too radical for her editors, if not her readers, she spoke directly to the women of her class who were then becoming involved in reform works. She claimed that "no beneficence can alter, no work of our hands or desire of our hearts" was sufficient, short of major social change.[62] Actual, radical societal reforms were necessary. "I write these final words with all deference to the noble women whose lives have been given to good work..." she stated.[63] "It is because I believe that with us is the power to remedy every one if we will, that I appeal to women to-day."[64] Thus, she suggested that it was woman's duty to change social problems.

Even more traditional journalists than Campbell fostered the idea that there was more to life for women than housework. Sallie Joy White, a writer for the Boston Herald, aimed her articles throughout the 1880s at women readers. Her columns, compiled in the book Housekeepers and Home-Makers, discussed nutrition, housework and other traditional aspects of women's spheres. Even traditionalist White counseled her women readers that they needed to be more worldly. They needed to read and study and expand their mental powers, she stated.[65]

Women's Newspapers

While some women journalists followed the path into newspapers through mainstream publications, other women took the unusual step of founding their own newspapers to present a woman's view of the news. Caroline Nichols Churchill published the monthly Colorado Antelope in 1879 because she believed "every state in the union should have a live feminine paper published at the capital."[66] She supported the publication of The Woman Voter, which was produced by the activist Woman's Club of Denver. In 1882, she started a weekly, The Queen Bee. She continued her support for suffrage, spoke out against poor treatment of the Indians, and used her newspaper to promote her own nomination for state superintendent of public instruction in 1894. She failed to secure the nomination.[67] Similarly, Marietta Lizzie Beers Stow published the Woman's Herald of Industry and Social Science Cooperator in September 1881 to support and reinforce the goals of the California Woman's Social Science Association, which she had founded a year earlier. Her association, which she founded in her hometown of San Francisco, advanced important social reforms. Stow asserted that the goals of her association included promotion of hygienic homes, production of unadulterated food, support of temperance and other social programs.[68] Stow and her sister, S.Gertrude Smyth, used their newspaper to promote their society, but eventually become more militant in their support of equal rights for women, and let their interest in other causes slip.[69] But their enthusiasm for causes such as pure food, dress reform and education showed that concerns for social reforms, which a decade later would crystalize in the municipal housekeeping movement, appeared among women journalists across the nation.

"Stunt Girls"

Women also were involved in promoting reform activities during the heyday of the "stunt girls" after the late 1880s. These were women who made front page news by carrying out bizarre feats. Cochrane, the New York World's "Nellie Bly," was the first and most notorious "stunt girl."[70] Winifred Black, the "Annie Laurie" of the San Francisco Examiner, also gained national notoriety for her feats. Black had herself treated at the San Francisco Receiving Hospital for an expose on the "city's disgrace" of a medical facility. She described sexual advances and brutal treatment by the hospital staff, including an assertion that she was force-fed incorrect medication and hauled to the hospital in a prison van.[71]

Most journalism historians, however, have studied these activities only as examples of sensationalism. While this aspect certainly is apparent, many of the articles by so-called "stunt girls" contained an element of reform journalism. Cochrane's first stunt at Blackwell's Island started the trend for women to perform feats. Other "stunt girls" exposed social ills with their masquerades, posing as shop girls to uncover exploitation of women, infiltrating factories to write about poor working conditions and checking on conditions at medical facilities. Their escapades appealed to readers in general and to middle-class women who were themselves becoming interested in reforms, albeit through more subdued methods. When club women in Chicago lobbied for better conditions at local prisons, their methods were effective but more traditional than Nellie Bly's writing on the front page of the New York World.

Antics by "stunt girls" actually broadened women's sphere in newspaper work. In addition to widening the scope of assignments for women on newspapers, these women sometimes saw their articles played prominently on the front page of the paper. While most front page assignments were still barred to women, stunt stories often were promoted by the papers and played on the front page. By contrast, just four years before Nellie Bly stormed New York, Campbell's series on poverty in New York was delegated to the back pages of the New York Tribune.

Thus, by 1900, when middle-class women were enmeshed in the goals of municipal housekeeping and its reform agenda, women journalists, too, embraced the mantra of reform. It was, by this time, long established that social problems and associated reform activities were an appropriate topic for women writers. The advent of muckraking journalism in the first decade of the new century trumpeted reforms in national publications. Women writers, too, were involved in this trend, profiting from the long-held tradition that made reform writing part of the "special sphere" for women journalists.

Endnotes

1. Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," American Quarterly 18 (Summer 1966): 151.

2. Nancy F. Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1977), 67.

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4. Ibid., 36.

5.Kathryn Kish Sklar, Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity (New Haven, Ct.: Yale, 1973), 163.

6. T.S. Arthur, The Lady at Home: or, Leaves from the Every-Day Book of an American Woman (Philadelphia, 1847), pp. 177-78, as quoted in Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," 163.

7. Susan Porter Benson, Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 13.

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9. Mott, American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 260 Years, 1690 to 1950 (New York: Macmillan, 1950), 599.

10. Maurine Beasley, The First Women Washington Correspondents (Washington, D.C.: GW Washington Studies, 1976), 2.

11. Ishbel Ross, Ladies of the Press (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1936), 15.

12. Ibid., 16.

13. Horace Greeley, Recollections of a Busy Life (New York: J.B. Ford, 1868), 171.

14. Arthur Brown, Margaret Fuller (New York: C. Boni, 1930), 73-75.

15. Madelon Golden Schilpp and Sharon M. Murphy, Great Women of the Press (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1983), 15.

16. Quoted in Barbara Belford, *Brilliant Bylines: A Biographical Anthology of Notable Newspaperwomen in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 9.

17. Quoted in Mary Elaine (Zunt) Trapp, "The Journalism of Margaret Fuller, 1844-1850," (Master's thesis, Kent State University, 1973), 25.

18. Greeley, *Recollections of a Busy Life*, 179-180.

19. Trapp, "The Journalism of Margaret Fuller," 51.

20. "Our City Charities," *New York Tribune*, 19 March 1845, quoted in Trapp, "The Journalism of Margaret Fuller," 51-52.

21. Trapp, "The Journalism of Margaret Fuller," Table 1, pp. 34-45, which provides a list of Fuller's *Tribune* articles that were penned in New York.

22. Greeley, *Recollections of a Busy Life*, 181.

23. Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 400-403.

24. Ibid., 401.

25. Ibid., 39-43.

26. Mott, *A History of American Magazines*, vol. 4, 679.

27. Fanny Fern, *Caper Sauce: A Volume of Chit Chat* (New York: G.W. Carleton & Co., 1872), 55.

28. Elizabeth Bancroft Schlesinger, "Fanny Fern: Our Grandmothers' Mentor," *New York Historical Society Quarterly* 38 (October 1954): 518-519.

29. Ibid.

30. Schilpp and Murphy, *Great Women*, 54.

31. Beasley, *First Women Washington Correspondents*, 6.

32. Bylines as such did not emerge until the Civil War when a Union general asked that they be placed on dispatches so that correspondents could be held accountable for their writing. Bylines did not become common until the turn of the century. It is, however, often relatively easy to pick out the writing of women journalists because they were given bylines or wrote regularly under a pseudonym that was associated with them.

33. An analysis of the New York Times on the days the Greenwood columns were published during the year 1873 indicates hers was the only byline in the paper.

34. Helen M. Winslow, "The Confessions of a Newspaper Woman," Atlantic Monthly, February 1905, 208.

35. Marion Marzolf, Up From the Footnote (New York: Communication Arts Books, Hastings House, 1977), 205-207.

36. A letter dated March 19, 1863, for example, was published in the St. Cloud Democrat on April 2.

37. Arthur J. Larsen, ed., Crusader and Feminist: Letters of Jane Grey Swisshelm, 1858-1865 (St. Paul Minnesota Historical Society, 1934), 164. Letter first appeared in the St. Cloud Democrat, 12 February 1863.

38. Ibid., 27-28.

39. Ibid.

40. Crusader and Feminist, 179. Letter in Democrat, 26 February 1863.

41. Ibid., 233. Letter in Democrat, 18 June 1863.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., 269. Letter in Democrat, 24 September 1863.

44. Ibid., 307-308. Letter in Democrat, 21 December 1865.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Mary Clemmer Ames, Ten Years in Washington, Life and Scenes in the National Capital, as a Woman Sees Them (Hartford, Conn.: A.D. Worthington & Co., 1874), 10.

48. Ibid., 377.

49. Ibid., 379.

50. Beasley, The First Women Washington Correspondents, 16.

51. Grace Greenwood, "Washington Notes," New York Times, 18 January 1873, p. 4.

52. Greenwood, "Washington Notes," New York Times, 25 January 1873, p. 4.

53. Ibid.

54. Greenwood, "Washington Notes," Times, 22 February 1873, p. 4.

55. Quoted in Beasley, First Women Washington Correspondents, 16.

56. Susan Henry, "The 'Unsavory Researches' of Helen Campbell: A 19th-Century Journalist's Investigation of Urban Women's Poverty," unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Oregon, August 1983, p. 6.

57. Campbell, "Prisoners of Poverty," New York Tribune, 24 October 1886, p. 13.

58. Helen Campbell, Prisoners of Poverty: Women Wage-Workers, Their Trades and Their Lives, (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1887; repr., Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970). The book was a compilation of the Tribune series.

59. Helen Campbell, "Prisoners of Poverty," New York Tribune, 13 March, 1887, p. 10, quoted in Henry, "The Unsavory Researches of Helen Campbell," 16.

60. "Conclusion of Prisoners of Poverty," New York Tribune, 13 March 1887, p. 4, quoted in Henry, "The Unsavory Researches of Helen Campbell," 16.

61. Ibid.

62. Campbell, Prisoners of Poverty, 257.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Sallie Joy White, Housekeepers and Home-Makers, (Boston: Jordan, Marsh, 1888), 9. All the advice in this book is reprinted from columns that initially appeared in the Boston Herald.

66. Quoted in Sherilyn Cox Bennison, Equal to the Occasion: Women Editors of the Nineteenth-Century West, (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1990), 87.

67. Ibid., 91.

68. Ibid., 100.

69. Ibid., 103.

70. Ross, Ladies of the Press, Chapter 5: "Nellie Bly," 48-59.

71. Faye B. Zuckerman, "Winifred Black (Annie Laurie)," *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, Vol. 25, (Detroit: Bruccoli Clark, 1984), 16.

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From an Incautious Heroine, Ishbel Ross:
Arms Outstretched Beneath a Backwards-billowing Old Glory

By

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From an Incautious Heroine, Ishbel Ross:

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In The Paper, Richard Kluger talked about an "incautious heroine" depicted in the crudely drawn tableau on the flag of New York Tribune. So did the incautious heroine, Ishbel Ross, leave her father plowing at Glenburnie Farm, near Toronto and embrace modern New York with arms outstretched. But Ishbel did not intend to trip as she reported history on the run. Ross was the second woman reporter to be hired by the Tribune. Of course, there were other women hired. But none was invited to work as a reporter in the inner sanctum of the city room. This is the story of the first years at the Tribune for Ishbel Ross, with some description of the other female reporter with whom she worked, Emma Bugbee; and some explanation about the hiring policies of Helen Rogers Reid, who used her influence to get more women on the newspaper.

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In The Paper, Richard Kluger talked about an "incautious heroine" depicted in the crudely drawn tableau on the flag of Herald Tribune. The oddly crafted "dingbat" had been there since April 10, 1866, the 25th anniversary of the newspaper's founding. Kluger called the tableau "a baroque snapshot of time arrested, an allegorical hieroglyph of the newspaper's function to render history on the run":[1]

> Father Time sits in brooding contemplation of antiquity, represented by the ruin of a Greek temple, a man and his ox plowing, a caravan of six camels passing before two pyramids, and an hourglass; to the right, a sort of Americanized Joan of Arc, arms outstretched beneath a backwards-billowing Old Glory, welcomes modernity in the form of a chugging railroad train, factories with smoking chimneys, an undated plow, and an industrial cogwheel (over which the incautious heroine is about to trip); atop the clock, ready to take off into the boundless American future, is an eagle -- all for no extra cost.[2]

So did the incautious heroine, Ishbel Ross, leave her father plowing at Glenburnie Farm, near Toronto and embrace modern New York with arms outstretched. But Ishbel did not intend to trip as she reported history on the run.

Ross had discovered something from working at the Toronto Daily News. She found newspaper work exciting and satisfying.[3] It so happened that Ishbel's Canadian editor knew the managing editor of the New York Tribune, Garet Garrett. Her old boss apparently gave her a letter of introduction. He had told her "I wish you luck, but don't be too optimistic." Ishbel said she took the letter and "tackled New York and Park Row"[4] -- the journalists' "street paved with gold," representing the veritable Eldorado cited in her article on Andrew Carnegie.

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[1] Richard Kluger, The Paper (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), p. 119.

[2] Kluger, The Paper, p. 119.

[3] Ishbel Ross, letter to Marion Marzolf (from 155 East Seventy-sixth Street), 17 May 1975.

[4] Ishbel Ross, interview notes, Marion Marzolf of Up From the Footnotes (December 1987).

Ishbel's luck held out. She was hired -- although the address of the old Tribune at the time as not Park Avenue, but 154 Nassau Street.[5]

Ross was the second woman reporter to be hired by the New York Tribune. Of course, there were other women hired. But none was invited to work as a reporter in the inner sanctum of the city room.

Her terse recollection made her hiring sound like a shoo-in. Ishbel had a habit of labeling any persistence on her own part as "luck." It's hard to believe it could have been that easy to get hired by the Tribune, especially because Ishbel wrote for at least one other newspaper on Park Row when she first arrived to Manhattan.

Her first bylined articled did happen to be for the New York Tribune, and appeared as a Sunday feature story under the headline "Our Drug Addicts and What We Are Doing for Them." It was published in Section VII, on Page 6, on April 27, 1919.

Under the name of Isabel M. Ross, Ishbel wrote a feature article called "Skibo Castle and Its Laird in Tartan." The Carnegie Article appeared in The New York Time Magazine, four months later. Whether it was a special for the New York Times cannot be ascertained as this late date.

This is the story of the first years at the Tribune for Ishbel Ross, with some description of the other female reporter with whom she worked, Emma Bugbee; and some explanation about the hiring policies of Helen Rogers Reid, who used her influence to get more women on the newspaper.

Earning First Tribune Byline

Ishbel's first bylined story did not have the distinction of her Carnegie article. But it would show her potential for telling a story with a depth of perspective. The article was written about the opening of a drug clinic at 145 Worth Street by the Health Department 17 days earlier. Here is an exert from "Our Drug Addicts and What We Are Doing for Them."

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[5] Walter Hamshar, letter to author (from Shamrock Circle, Santa Rosa, California), 31 August 1988.

She addresses "the strange freemasonry" among the addicts:

> A particularly low type is represented in the addicts coming to the clinic. The great majority of them are uneducated and unskilled in any line of work. Among the odds and ends of humanity who drift in day after day are the subnormal, the defective and the criminal. A few processionals type are to be found -- a schoolteacher, four doctors and a journalist. And there are a great many average people, of fair intelligence and some education, who started to take drugs through sickness or suffering.
>
> But no matter what their class, education or training, there is a strange freemasonry among them all -- an understanding of the high signs of their companions in misery. It is like the language of the Romany Rye that inscribed itself on trees and posts by the wayside, and only the initiated understand what it means. Flashes of intuition are transmitted from flittering eyelids.
>
> Strange combinations are seen. The professional and "down and outers" hobnob together. The school teacher and the colored man with the vicious face have some common ground of contact.
>
> There is a vague antagonism born out toward the people who are looking after them. A crafty watch is kept on the operations of the doctor. In a dozen ways they try to outwit him -- to get away with more than his share of the drug. A shambling man approaches the doctor. He can't wait another minute. He is all in. Subject to fits, too. Does the doctor want him to die on his hands? If he'll give him a prescription for a month's supply he'll go to the hospital and have it made up.

Mary Margaret McBride, a contemporary of Ishbel Ross, said it was very difficult to break into New York newspapers. In her book called A Long Way From Missouri, she related her own persistence. McBride repeatedly tried to get a job with the New York Tribune; she finally gave that up in "utter discouragement." Like Ishbel, she carried with her a letter of introduction. Dean Walter Williams of the school of journalism at Missouri had recommended her highly to Ogden Reid, publisher of the Tribune.[6] McBride had followed what Ishbel had called "the present tendency" for young journalists to break into the newspaper field after college training. As a sign of the times, the idea of a journalism education was becoming more viable. To answer the need for competent young writers, a school had even opened its doors in the neighborhood of Park Row.

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[6] Mary Margaret McBride, A Long Way From Missouri (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1959), p. 69. Years later Helen Rogers Reid told McBride of finding among some old papers a letter from Dean Walter Williams of the Missouri School of Journalism recommending her highly to her husband: "Why didn't you ever come to see him?" Reid asked.

Through an arrangement made in 1903, Joseph Pulitzer founded a school of journalism at Columbia University. He subsidized his project with a group of prizes and other awards. The total bequeathed monies were $8 million in 1904, followed with a legacy for the balance of $2.25 million upon his death in 1911.[7] The Columbia School of Journalism was founded in 1912.[8]

Young people were drawn into the newspaper business because there was a peak in total daily and in evening newspapers in the first decade of the twentieth century. A new high in circulation was reported in 1909.[9] In the decade that followed, in spite of increases in the number of daily newspaper cities, "consolidations and the spread of the large urban areas over fields which had supported dailies in earlier decades caused a continual decline of the number of papers. The total slipped from 2,600 in 1909 and 2,580 in 1914, particularly during the stringent publication conditions of World War days, to 2,441 in 1919."[10]

It was easier for larger newspaper operations to continue publishing. McBride and Ross were not alone in realizing opportunity lay with these publications.

McBride mailed the letter from Dean Williams of Missouri to Ogden Reid, the Tribune publisher, because she never made it into the city room. She had asked to speak to the city editor any number of times, but never could get by the office boy at the Tribune.[11] McBride said, "In my wildest imaginings it wouldn't have occurred to me to ask to see Mr. Ogden Reid himself. The city editor was the most I dared to hope for, and he, according to the office boy, was always just getting out an edition: . . . I'd been turned away by so many stone-faced office boys in newspaper offices that I doubted that I'd ever get to talk to a real editor."[12]

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[7] Alfred McClung Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1937), p. 196.

[8] Stanley Walker, City Editor (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1934), p. 216.

[9] Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America: The Evolution of a Social Instrument, p. 65.

[10] Lee, The Daily Newspaper in America, p. 65.

[11] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 69.

Finding a Real Editor

Ishbel apparently had found a real editor. She said she was hired because Garet Garrett was progressive.[13] Garrett made many lasting contributions to the newspaper. His hiring of Ishbel has been overlooked as one of his actions by historians Richard Kluger and Harry Baehr.

Garrett had been with the Tribune since 1916, becoming managing editor a year later.[14] Baehr, the New York Tribune's early newspaper historian, called Garrett "a man of abounding energy and courage, temperamental and decisive, who exercised a great influence over the course of the paper."[15] Probably Garrett's most outstanding contribution was to "bring order out of the somewhat chaotic appearance which the paper was assuming under the pressure of war news and crusading zeal."[16] Kluger said of Garrett's editing in The Paper, "So simple yet so effective was the facelift he imposed that for the next half century, the paper would be regarded as the standard-setter for typographic excellence in the U.S. Press."[17] He also hired the standard-setter for reporter during his tenure -- Ishbel Ross.

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[12] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 69.

[13] Ishbel Ross, Interview Notes, by Marion Marzolf, Up From the Footnote (April 1975).

[14] Harry W. Baehr, Jr., The New York Tribune Since the Civil War (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1936), p. 299.
Garrett became managing editor on July 1, 1917, and succeeded Clinton Gilbert as Ogden Reid's second-in-command.

[15] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 299.

[16] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 299. Garrett was not responsible for all of the changes in page make-up. His actions followed a general policy of typographical improvements begun as early as 1914. Baehr noted that the hyphen for instance in New-York Tribune disappeared all together on April 16, 1914. The width of the page was increased from 7 to 8 columns on June 23, 1914. Therefore, more space became available. However, when Garrett became managing editor, photographs and headlines were used more freely, set off with white space. Baehr said the special demands of the Tribune's crusading activities led the use of the Bodoni typeface.

Walter Hamshar, who began work as night receptionist in November 1922 and who had considerable time to view reporters at his post just outside the city room, suggested Ishbel might have been hired by Hood MacFarlane, the city editor, as was the general rule in those days. Hamshar remembered Ishbel as "a pretty lassie who usually wore a jaunty tam type hat and plaid skirts." Hamshar said the appearance of such a person presenting herself for employment would have been a surprise to MacFarlane.[18] Perhaps McFarlane did have a hand in the hiring although Ishbel's direct statement is evidence to the contrary.

While McBride could not make it past the office boy, the editors were busy recruiting and grooming potential young men from across the nation for the newspaper business. Gene Fowler said that before World War I heavy scouting of young newspapermen was practiced:[19]

> Editors of the Middle West of the East quite often saw the work of a lively young man of the lesser newspapers, or else heard about his abilities from staff correspondents. One's talents might become known in far-off city room though a reporter's stories seldom were signed. A byline was a more uncommon thing than in your modern newspaper, the pages of which carry more credits than the stud book of a Kentucky breeding farm.[20]

One's talents in a far-off city room might become known if one were a male. McBride got her start on a lesser press, just like Ishbel got hers on a Toronto paper, but neither was scouted. The whole attitude toward women journalists was "Don't call us, we'll call you."

McBride's experiences with the Cleveland Press are in accord with this explanation. While Ishbel had worked for the mere sum of $7 a week for the Toronto Daily News, McBride had been offered $35 a week to work for the Press. The Editor said, "We are paying you $35.

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[17] Kluger, The Paper, p. 199.

[18] Walter Hamshar, letter to author (from 79 Shamrock Circle, Santa Rosa, California), 31 August 1988.

[19] Gene Fowler, Skyline; A Reporter's Reminiscences of the 1920s (New York: Viking Press, 1961), p. 19.

[20] Fowler, Skyline, p. 19.

. . . It's probably more than any woman reporter is worth. And if you are not worth it, out you will have to go!"[21]

As general reporter for the Press, McBride said: "I covered everything from murder to markets, learned to concentrate on leads, to be fast and accurate writing a yarn from some other reporter's notes or from a publicity release. I often turned out as many as fourteen pieces of copy a day."[22]

General prejudice apparently worked against the hiring of a competent young woman like Ishbel, or McBride. Stanley Walker, later city editor of the combined New York Herald Tribune, said just a decade later that it still was "so difficult for a young woman, just out of college, or with a few years' experience on a small paper, who really feels that she has a capacity for newspaper work, to get the slightest encouragement in the larger cities."[23]

Walker said that most women got their start in newspaper work through some sort of pull, a system that curiously, brought some good women into the newspaper profession.[24] He said: "[T]hey went to school with the publisher's daughter; their mothers were neighbors of the chief editorial writer's mother; they knew the managing editor's sister when they were little girls together. All that sort of thing. This system, curiously, brings some good women into the business."[25]

Bringing in a Good Woman

One of those good women was Helen Rogers Reid. As wife of Ogden Reid, she had that kind of pull. Ogden Reid was the son and heir-apparent to the newspaper legacy of his father, Whitelaw Reid, and to the dynasty of wealth passed on through his mother, Elizabeth Mills Reid.

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[21] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 20.

[22] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 21.

[23] Walker, City Editor, pp. 252-253.

[24] Walker, City Editor, p. 253.

[25] Walker, City Editor, p. 253.

Helen Rogers was born in Appleton, Wisconsin, and went to school at Barnard College, where she developed a deep interest in science. Like Ishbel, she had studied the classics, nearly majoring in them.[26] She then served as social secretary to Elizabeth Mills Reid for eight years.

In March 1911 she married Ogden in Racine, Wisconsin.[27] They had a country and a city residence: 25 West Fifty-Third Street, just off Fifth Avenue; and the misnamed Ophir Cottage, a 31-room mansion in Purchase, New York, just down the road from the Ophir Hall estate.[28]

In her early harried years, Helen Rogers Reid busied herself in the cause of women's suffrage -- "an activity which the Tribune strongly supported," according to Ishbel.[29] Ishbel noted that Reid devoted herself to the cause of suffrage as treasurer for the New York State Women's Suffrage Party; in 1917 she helped raise $500,000 for the cause.[30] When the vote was won, she decided to get into newspaper work. In the autumn oµ 1918, Reid became an advertising solicitor for the Tribune. Harry Baehr said Ogden supported his wife's decision to join the staff.[31] By the time Ishbel had arrived, Reid was already in charge of the advertising department.[32]

Helen Rogers Reid set about making the newspaper pay for itself. Although the Tribune was the newspaperman's idea of a newspaper, the paper had been by tradition profoundly deficient of advertising. In 1868, Samuel Sinclair had carried on the work of the advertising, circulation and business departments with a staff of no more than 30 assistants.[33] This staff, more or less, grew slowly through the next four decades. So "little emphasis was placed on advertising" that when Reid came to the department, national advertising was handled by only one man.[34]

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[26] Kluger, The Paper, p. 173.

[27] Ishbel Ross, Ladies of the Press (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936], p. 136. See also Richard Kluger. In The Paper, he sets the place of marriage as Appleton.

[28] Kluger, The Paper, p. 262.

[29] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 373.

[30] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 136. In The Paper, p. 202, Kluger sets this amount at $250,000.

[31] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 373.

[32] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 136.

Reid made major changes. She significantly increased the numbers in advertising so that more staffers were out soliciting accounts.[35] Other factors had actually worked against increasing the Tribune's advertising revenues. In 1916, the Prohibition movement was gathering the final momentum that led to the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. There was "widespread public mistrust of the legislative and business methods of the 'liquor interests.'"[36] As a sign of the times, on April 1, 1916, the Tribune announced a new business policy: no advertising on liquor. The goal was "to keep the paper's advertising columns select and unimpeachable" and "to eliminate from them all traces of suspicious association."[37] Advertising claims were investigated. Several big accounts, such as Gimbel's were lost through the inconsistent decisions in implementing this campaign. Historian Baehr said the paper's emphatic campaigns for truth in advertising, for preparedness and for loyalty stimulated a "transient interest which would have to be maintained on a sounder basis."[38] Reid was ready to meet the challenge.

Ishbel said Reid proceed in a businesslike way to establish an even-handed policy. the businesswoman was determined to persuade advertisers to publish in the Tribune, even if it meant handling many accounts herself. She had discovered the name "Mrs. Ogden Reid, Mrs. New York Tribune," opened doors, and as Kluger said, she did not hesitate to march through them.[39]

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[33] Baehr, The New York Tribune....., p. 395.

[34] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 395.

[35] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 395.

[36] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 297.

[37] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 298.

[38] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 371.

[39] Kluger, The Paper, p. 203.

Ishbel reporter on the manager's meteoric rise: "In five years' time the advertising went up from 4,170,812 to 11,203,082 lines. Reid lured in errant account and put over a particularly smart stroke in getting Gimbel's advertising back, after it had been lost during the Tribune's campaign against dubious advertising. In 1918 the circulation of the paper was 95,000."[40]

Richard Kluger said when Helen Rogers Reid began to work on the paper, no one on its atrophying staff had even suspected that the Tribune "had acquired a new life force that in ways both subtle and exceedingly obvious would dominate its course for nearly half a century."[41] Kluger gave her the ultimate compliment in the eyes of most men: "Helen Rogers Reid was worth as much as any man, and a damned sight more than most."[42] The same would be said of Ishbel in years to come.

Ishbel said Reid was highly successful because she conducted all of her affairs on a fair basis. Reid backed her own words with action. For instance, Ishbel called her "a genuine feminist, both in theory and in fact" -- a stance that carried over into the daily business of the Tribune; Reid believe "in the minor manifestations of feminism, as well as the major ones":[43]

> No post is too big for a capable woman, in her opinion. She advocates the modern trinity of a job, a husband and children. She asks no special favors from the moment she steps into the office. She prefers the men on the staff not to take off their hats when they ride in the elevators with her. She does not like them to get up when she a[[ears. She wants to work with them on an absolutely even basis.[44]

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[40] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 137.

[41] Kluger, The Paper, p. 181.

[42] Kluger, The Paper, p. 173.

[43] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 138.

[44] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 138.

Walter Hamshar said although Helen Rogers Reid confined most of her efforts to advertising and business management, she did have considerable influence in the editorial department.[45] Perhaps that influence extended to the hiring of women.

Giving Women an Even Chance

Ishbel said both Ogden and Helen Rogers Reid had shown confidence in newspaperwomen "by giving them positions of the highest trust."[46] She also said the Reids "gave women an even chance throughout the organization."[47]

To what degree Ogden initiated "an even chance" and how substantially the newspaper "always supported" women staffers is debatable. Before the coming of Ishbel, this apparently had not always been so. In fact, the general rule had been to confine women to reporting "the women's angle of the news."

At the turn of the century, there were as many as five women on most of the large dailies, such as the Tribune.[48] These women were to write up the women's angle to the news: "It was not the news event that mattered but the woman writer's reactions to it." Ishbel said that, on some publications, a woman journalist was sometimes allowed to sit at a desk in the city room. One of her contemporaries described the city room of the time as "the dirty, dingy, tobacco-polluted local room."[49]

> The city editor shouted for where just as he did for the men. He told her to "rush it lively," in the brisk slang of the day. Her colleagues had abandoned the notion that they must leap to her feet at her appearance, put their pipes

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[45] Hamshar, letter to author, 31 August 1988.

[46] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 25.

[47] Ross. Ladies of the Press, p. 139.

[48] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 20.

[49] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 20.

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> in their pockets, or take off their hats. They cursed and drank as freely as if she were not anywhere about. But they never took her seriously.[50]

Certainly, they did not take the typical woman in the city room as seriously as the staff at the Tribune took Helen Rogers Reid.

To be ignored is one thing. To be the object of animosity is another. In Ladies of the Press, Ishbel described the marked differences in attitude toward female and male reporters and in the newsrooms of the larger New York papers of the latter 1800s and early 1900s. Ishbel said James Gordon Bennett of the Herald was much against the idea of women in the city room, but would allow the need for perhaps one woman on the paper to write the woman's angle:

> "Who are these females? Fire them all," said James Gordon Bennett impatiently, as he walked through the editorial room of the Herald on one of his infrequent trips to America and saw a few hapless women sitting about. He was notoriously averse to pompadours in the city room, and the wise girls made themselves scarce when he came home. Both he and Frank A. Munsey were interested in social news and the club activities of smart women. They vaguely felt the need of one woman on the paper to cope with these matters, and Mr. Bennett liked precise descriptions of what women wore -- particularly the president's wife.[51]

As for The New York Times, "it was an understood, rather than an enunciated policy," that Adolph S. Ochs was opposed to having women on the general news staff of his paper, according to Ishbel.[52] The Times, liberal in all other respects, "stuck tenaciously to this policy for more than 30 years, although three women sat in the city room and took assignments of the departmental order from the city desk."[53] The Sunday magazine and book review section meanwhile featured excellent work by women.

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[50] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 20.

[51] Ross, Ladies of the Press, pp. 23-24.

[52] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 25.

[53] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 25.

The Tribune had made several inroads into the hiring of women journalists. A few women had written with distinction for the Tribune in the 1800s, according to Ishbel. In the early 1840s Horace Greeley had asked Margaret Fuller to write for the Tribune, although she did not sit in the newsroom -- nor was she physically present in the building.[54] Ishbel said that Fuller was "the first really distinguished woman writer to contribute to an American paper. . . . He did not make the mistake of asking Miss Fuller to write for women. He employed her to write' soundly for his flourishing journal. The idea spread."[55]

It spread, not by design, but by forces brought on by urbanization and industrialization. Marion Marzolf, in Up From the Footnote, said that in most quarters there was a changing social attitude about working women. The new economic and legal status for women, plus increased educational opportunities for them, "opened new horizons for women who wished to work outside the home in something other than nursing and teaching."[56]

Ishbel and McBride were two from this new class of working women. McBride said her determination to succeed in the larger world was "something fairly new"[57] for the Middle Western female: "I was the first woman in my family who had ever aspired to be anything but a teacher or at any rate dreamed that she could be. But the very fact that I'd worked my way through college on that paper instead of waiting on tables or washing dishes showed that I was part of a new era.[58]

With women working outside the home in visible occupations, there evolved the further idea that reporting from the women's perspective could be profitable. It was thought no one could better cover the women's angle than women. Magazines were the medium that rushed to fill the vacuum:

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[54] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 16.

[55] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 16.

[56] Marion Marzolf, Up from the Footnote: A History of Women Journalists (New York: Hastings House, 1977), p. 27.

[57] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 14.

[58] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 14.

> The rapid growth of popular mass circulation magazines in the turn-of-the-century era, such as The Saturday Evening Post, The Ladies home Journal, Cosmopolitan, Collier's, Munsey's, McClure's, and McCall's greatly expanded the job market for women who found magazine work less pressured and more inviting than daily newspaper journalism. Magazines created a large freelance market. Several women became outstanding editors and writers, especially on the women's magazines.[59]

Women journalists by 1889 had made such an impact on the profession that the Journalist, a professional journal in New York City, devoted its entire January 26 issue to the profiles of women editors and reporters, ten of them black.[60] The editor admitted his mistake in not devoting space to women journalists previously and said that "he wished to disabuse the old-fogies of the profession of the idea that a newspaperwoman is in any way less a woman because she earned her living by wielding a pencil instead of sewing buttons for the 'lords of creation.'"[61]

Those profiles included editors of women's magazines in New York, reporters and editors from Chicago and other Midwestern towns, and from the South. Many of the profiles dovetailed with Helen Rogers Reid's test of a capable woman worker. The profiles "made the point that these women were able journalists as well as charming and feminine women, wives and mothers."[62] No one thought to make the parallel observation that men could be able journalists as well as charming and masculine men, husbands and fathers.

Struggling to Change Minds

Women on the Tribune might have had "an even chance," and "even positions of trust" in the latter 1910s, as Ishbel alleged -- but first certain women had to struggle had to change minds. Of course, as Ishbel and Marion Marzolf agreed, there had always been women who followed the example of Margaret Fuller and who wrote for various newspapers about their political convictions. The two cited as examples Rheta Childe Dorr and Ida Minerva Tarbell. Even so, one could place all the women regularly employed in 1903 (when an unofficial count was taken) as reporters through the country in one large newsroom. There were about 300 of them.[63]

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[59] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, pp. 26-27.

[60] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 24.

[61] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, pp. 24-25.

[62] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 25.

The suffrage movement would change this. Not only would it bring women into the newsroom, but it would provide a sense of front-line involvement for those women who felt left out in the years of World War I. McBride described the inclination of many young women of the time when she said: "I remember one day in chemistry lab a classmate name Julia and me being sunk in gloom because the First World War was ending without us." The young women were convinced that they would never amount to anything because they had not been "female Richard Harding Davises, fight up on the front lines."[64]

It was the women who wrote about suffrage who made the great advances in the newsroom, including that of the Tribune.[65] Ishbel's Pankhurst interview was an example of this truth. Emma Bugbee, the first woman to make it into the Tribune's newsroom, got her start in the same way. Ishbel wrote to Marzolf about Bugbee's beginnings on the paper:

> World War I, like all wars, brought women writes into prominence, and such reporters as Emma Bugbee, for the New York Tribune, marched with the suffrage workers and covered these early liberationists at a time when newspapermen laughed at them and scoffed at their gatherings. It was a re-run of the days of Susan B. Anthony and Lucy Stone, and a preview of . . . [Betty] Friedan, Gloria Steinem.[66]

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[63] Modern Times, p. 274.

[64] McBride, A Long Way From Missouri, p. 13.

[65] Ishbel Ross, letter to Marion Marzolf (from 155 East Seventy-sixth Street, Manhattan), 17 May 1975.

[66] Ross, letter to Marzolf, 17 May 1975.

Emma Bugbee's acceptance into the Tribune's city room did not happen overnight. She had graduated from Barnard College six years after Helen Rogers Reid.[67] Bugbee looked like the proper Barnard graduate. She was described by Ishbel as "a shy girl with candid blue eyes and a New England conscience."[68]

She was one of those new career women who decided teaching as not for her. After a year at Methuen High School, she walked into the New York Tribune office and got a job -- thus setting a record as the first woman hired as a hard-news reporter for the Tribune."[69]

It is not known if Reid's Barnard connection were a factor in the hiring of Bugbee, because she was graduated from the same alma mater. Nor is it known if Bugbee were the person entrusted to write about an interest close to the heart of the publisher's wife. However, what a curious circumstance that place Emma Bugbee, Barnard graduate and feminist,. with the Tribune at a time when the suffrage movement began to get increasing coverage in many newsrooms. The year was 1911 -- eight years before Ishbel became the second woman to cover hard news for the newspaper.

It must have been difficult to work out all the logistics to make way for the first woman reporter. Bugbee was not seated in the city room, but had to work down the hall.[70] Eleanor Booth Simmons, who had done the Sunday specials for the Tribune and who assisted Bugbee in the coverage on suffrage, had to walk downstairs to work with her. Simmons had been sequestered on an upper floor, where the women's department for the newspaper was located.[71]

Ishbel said that at the beginning of the suffrage campaign, Madelaine Pierce, the editor of the women's page, sent all the copy downstairs to the city room by copyboy. Pierce did this so that "no one would suffer from the obnoxious sight of a female in the city room." George

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[67] Kluger, The Paper, p. 220.

[68] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 122.

[69] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 122.

[70] Kay Mills, A Place in the News (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1988), p. 133.

[71] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 122.

Murdick, then city editor, was "dubious of the strange beings who inhabited the upper regions."[72]

The feminists captured plenty of front-page column inches, as they battled for the women's vote by marching on the streets across America. Likewise, the women reporters who wrote about the suffragists were fighting their own battles -- to get their stories on the front page. Ishbel later would write about the ordeals that the newspaperwomen experienced to reap recognition for their work.

When the suffrage movement was in its busiest years, Bugbee and Simmons of the Tribune worked nearly full time of the interviews because there were neither press agents nor handouts.[73] Bugbee and Simmons had to go personally to see Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, Carrie Chapman Catt or Alva Smith Belmont. Ishbel said that the two reporters had to dig out letters from their mail that might make news: "Things were particularly lively during the days of the Bull Moose campaign. New women's political organizations were forming overnight."[74]

"The reporters were run off their feet" because there were so many day-to-day events to cover. However, when the women's movement made page one, the stories were assigned to newspapermen.[75] Ishbel, who cataloged the advances of the Tribune's women staffers in Ladies of the Press, said

> the women were allowed work up a story . . . but when it became front-page stuff they were snatched off it and a man was put on the job. one striking example was Mrs. Emmeline Pankhurst's detention at Ellis Island, when she came to America in the heat of the suffrage campaign. A man was assigned to the story. It was apt to be the same for suffrage parades.[76]

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[72] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 122.

[73] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 44.

[74] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

[75] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123; and Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 44.

[76] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

According to Ishbel, the last big suffrage parade in New York pushed the women staffers into a "now or never" stance. On the eve of the parade, they took decisive action. Evangeline Cole was deputized to ask Ogden Reid "if the women could handle the entire story themselves." Reid hesitated at first. But finally, he relied that "if Milton Snyder, the night managing editor, consented, it would be all right with him."[77] She said:

> The battle was won, because Mr. Snyder liked the work of the women reporters. Mr. Burdick surrendered and helped to map out the day's schedule. Miss Simmons wrote the lead, a double column story on the front page. Miss Bugbee did the straight news story. Ethel Peyser, who specialized in domestic science news for the Tribune, helped her. Miss Cole and Christine Valleau, the department secretary, took the side stories. They filled nine columns between them. Not a word of their copy was changed. This was a great triumph for the suffrage reporters.[78]

Marching on the Suffrage Front

While men marched off to war, the women considered themselves war correspondents on the suffrage front. Bugbee joined other prominent women reporters of the time on a 150-mile march to Albany in the winter of 1914. These famous names included Dorothy Dix, Ada Patterson, Viola Rodgers, Zoe Beckley, Sophie Treadwell, Martha Coman, Ethel Lloyd Pattern, Virginia Hudson and others. The newspaperwomen "marched side by side with the militants and shared the brickbats and cheers."[79]

Suffragist General Roslie Jones led the march. She carried a petition, which urged suffrage measures be placed before the New York State Legislature. Jones planned to present the petition to Governor Martin H. Glynn.[80]

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[77] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

[78] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123. See Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 44.

[79] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

[80] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

When the planned parade had begun to look like a story, the managing editor of the Tribune said to Bugbee: "I think we ought to be covered on this. Could you get one of the women [suffragists] to keep in touch with us every night and tell us what happens?"[81]

Ishbel explained how Bugbee, the proposed Barnard graduate, softly hinted that she could cover the story herself:

> "I suppose I should go along with them," said Miss Bugbee.
> But the editors in those days felt that women reporters should not get their feet wet, if it could be avoided. . . .
> "Oh, we wouldn't want you to do a thing like that," he said, a little shocked. "It would be so cold."
> "Bit I want to," Miss Bugbee insisted heartily.
> "Well, it would be fine if you feel that way about it."[82]

She felt that way about it. The "war correspondent" got wet and cold, as predicted, but had other adventures as well. Ishbel chronicled the suffragists' Albany march. She said they were en route on Christmas Day:

> The local women arranged meetings along the way. There were many human interest stories about this motley army, tramping through the snow in the burdensome costumes of the period. They arrived in Albany led by a police escort and fife and drum corps. [Suffragist] General [Rosalie] Jones carried a lighted lantern. The camp followers and "war correspondents" had to struggle with the spectators on the sidewalk to keep them from breaking through the line to shake hands with the little general.[83]

Bugbee tramped through snow for a week on the pilgrimage from New York, up the west bank of the Hudson to Albany. Kluger said every night "Bugbee managed to find a phone, still an uncommon instrument in rural areas, and call in the day's developments."[84]

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[81] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123.

[82] Ross, Ladies of the Press, pp. 123-124.

[83] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 124.

[84] Kluger, The Paper, p. 220.

In later coverage of the movement. Bugbee rode in a police patrol to Yonkers where the suffragists congregated to heckle President Woodrow Wilson. Ishbel said:

> Miss Bugbee found herself in the thick of a suffrage brawl when Alice Paul, of the Woman's Party, tried to crash the Metropolitan Opera House with the followers and banners, while Woodrow Wilson was speaking there. They wanted to badger him on the suffrage question. But the police got rough with them instead. One minute they were walking on the sidewalk, the next the police had pounced on them and the street was filled with tumult.[85]

About that time, Bugbee "invaded her first saloon and startled the bartender by demanding coffee."[86] According to Ishbel's account of her colleague's early newspaper history:

> Miss Bugbee's stories made the front page. They were done in a jocular vein. No one took suffrage seriously at this stage, except the suffragists themselves. However, the trip to Albany incited them to further efforts. They decided to storm Washington. This time they wore pilgrim capes and brown hoods for identification. The same group of newspaper girls [newspaperwomen] accompanied them. Miss Bugbee took them as far as Philadelphia. The Tribune was thoroughly covered all along the route of the march.[87]

The march on Washington was a great success. But when the suffragists arrived at the Capitol, "mobs of hoodlums defied the police and broke up the orderly line of 9,000 marchers, knocking down women, spitting in their faces, yelling epithets at them."[88]

Behind the efforts of the women staffers was the silent moving force of Helen Rogers Reid, even though her direct influence cannot be measured. Kluger said: "Not by coincidence or merely timely mellowing did the Tribune editorial page patronizingly note the suffragist activities when they picked up steam in 1912 and then wholeheartedly endorse the female franchise when the campaign reached its critical stage in 12918."[89]

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[85] Ross, Ladies of the Press, pp. 124-125.

[86] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 124.

[87] Ross, Ladies of the Press, pp. 124.

[88] Ross, Ladies of the Press, pp. 122. There are some time conflicts in Ross' account of the suffrage parade in Washington. Ross sets the arrival in Washington on March 3, 1913. The parade seems logically to have happened after the march to Albany in December 1914. There might have been two marches on Washington, although this is doubtful -- one on March 3, 1913, and one in 1915.

Kluger said that even before she joined the working staff, she urged her husband "to bear in mind the women readers " But, according to the historian, "she was careful to tread with a light step into her husband's territory."[90] More space, especially on Sundays, was devoted to the activities of women. In 1915, the Tribune Home Institute was founded as a laboratory to test and experiment with recipes and products for the home. Men's fashions and furniture were also included in the family department of the paper.[91]

> Soon after . . . women ceased to be a novelty in the city room of the Tribune. For a time they swarmed within the call of the city desk. Ernestine Evans, Marie Montalvo, Hannah Mitchell, Blanche Brace, Solita Solano, Sarah Addington, Hilda Jackson, Natalie McCloskey, Rebecca Drucker, Selma Robinson, all came and went, finding their ultimate fortunes in other fields.[92]

Emma Bugbee would stay at the Tribune, working until the newspaper folded in the mid-1960s. Until Ishbel came in 1919, Bugbee would continue to be the only woman on the city staff itself. Eight years of a battle for recognition had already been fought by Bugbee when Ishbel was hired.

After the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment by Congress in 1920, Bugbee continued to report on women working for the vote, and she followed the stories of women candidates running for office.[93] As the Tribune's only hard-news reporter on women's issues, she was much in demand for assignments involving her sisters' progress in the public sector of American life.

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[89] Kluger, The Paper, p. 202.

[90] Kluger, The Paper , p. 204.

[91] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 275. See also Kluger, The Paper, pp. 204-205.

[92] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 125.

[93] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 125; and Marzolf, up From, the Footnote.

According to Marzolf's Up From the Footnote, Bugbee was "on hand for every innovation -- the first woman judge, the first woman governor, the first woman registrar."[94] Ishbel said that when women leaders failed or turned corrupt Bugbee "was incredulous." When they did a good job, "she was quietly triumphant."[95]

Emma Bugbee had reasons to be quietly triumphant for her own efforts. Walter Hamshar said Bugbee had made it easier for Ishbel to be hired because she had "proven that women reporters could handle some general news as well as men."[96] Because of Bugbee, Ishbel Ross could sit in the city room her first day on the job. Taking assignments as general reporters, Bugbee would cover women's issues and Ishbel would be called upon to cover everything else.

Ishbel said a contributing factor that led to her hiring was that so many staff men were still away at war.[97] The idea had caught on that would should release men from their jobs while they were away fighting. The experiment proved women skillful, willing and patient. The employers became enthusiastic for change.[98]

But these factors of success, according to writer Ray Strachey, intensified an even greater difficulty for the employed women: opposition from their male peers. He said: "The better the women were, and the more the employers liked them, the less welcome did their men colleagues find them; and their hostility at time seriously threatened the whole experiment."[99]

So a few women -- such as Emma Bugbee and Ishbel Ross -- got into the newsroom, but not too many so as to threaten the male bastion of writers. Most token women did not last long but several newspaperwomen with outstanding ability paved the way for others. The most

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[94] Marzolf, Up From the Footnote, p. 44.

[95] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 123; and Marzolf, up From, the Footnote, p. 44.

[96] Walter Hamshar, letter to author (from 79 Shamrock Circle, Santa Rosa, California), 31 August 1988.

[97] Ishbel Ross, interview with Marion Marzolf of up From the Footnote (December 1987 communication to Merrick).

[98] Ray Strachey, The Cause, A Short History of the Women's Movement in Britain (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1928), p. 341.

[99] Strachey, The Cause, p. 341.

"sensible of those women" made the best reporters, according to Ishbel. She wrote in Ladies of the Press: "The women who have gone fartherest in journalism are not those who have yipped most loudly about their rights. Unless aggressiveness is backed by real ability, . . . it is only a boomerang. Nothing has done more to keep women reporters in the shade. Peace at any price is the city room philosophy."[100]

Helen Rogers Reid apparently understood this philosophy of the city room. And, in the words of Kluger, she was pleased when the Tribune finally supported the Nineteenth Amendment wholeheartedly, if belatedly.[101]

The Tribune's innovation in time of war was to offer coverage by a stable of writers surpassed by none. The staff Ishbel joined had her same penchant for quality reporting, and this was reflected in the newspaper's daily offerings. In addition to Bugbee and company, the newspaper had been attracting and grooming the best male editors and writers since Ogden Reid took over as managing editor five years before. Many of them were gone from the newsroom in World War I, or had recently returned. In 1919, many of them were as unfamiliar with the daily operations of the Tribune newsroom as Ishbel.

The Tribune management considered the paper very much involved in the war, even proposing in its newspaper columns, before official U.S. involvement, that an expeditionary force be sent to Europe.[102] Many of the staff were caught up by the interventionist tendencies. All served the war effort in some way: some as soldiers and some as war correspondents. Many would stay on the Tribune, and Ishbel would later share bylined space on the front page with them.

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[100] Ross, Ladies of the Press, p. 9. Ishbel cites Rheta Childe Dorr as the woman with that kind of ability.

[101] Kluger, The Paper, p. 205.

[102] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., p. 328.

Managing With an Indifferent Hand

In The Paper, Kluger wrote about the incongruities of management in the Tribune when Ishbel had arrived. Whitelaw Reid had managed the paper for decades with an indifferent hand before his death. [103] Baehr said after Ogden Reed took over, it was apparent that his system of management was unconventional. He permitted subordinates "free hand in their departments." Such a system could run smoothly only if he selected able assistants who would operate with little supervision.[104] This is one thing Ogden did well with "the silent influence" of his wife. At the end of the war the Tribune was in a far stronger position because of acquisitions of talented editorial staff members, such as managing editor Garrett -- who in turn recruited able persons like Ishbel. Also, many of the competent editorial staff recruited before Ogden's tenure had stayed with the paper. The improved editorial product increased readership, and therefore, circulation.[105]

During World War I, Ogden also inaugurated the system of sending general reporters, rather than editorial writers, to foreign posts. Treating world news like local events would ultimately cultivate the atmosphere of a general news department that acted like a city desk for the world. Therefore, when Ishbel worked as a general assignment reporters for the city desk of the Tribune, she often served as a reporters of world events. This did not seem unusual to her. After all, the war did not seem far away when a large consignment of the British fleet had practiced target shooting within sight and sound of her remote childhood village of Bonar Bridge, near Dornoch Firth.[106]

While the Tribune covered the actions of "war correspondents" at home and abroad -- marching on two fronts, its preoccupation with sports became almost a legendary third front. This love affair with sports would place the paper in good stead for years to come.

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[103] Kluger, The Paper, pp. 178-182.

[104] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., P. 291.

[105] Baehr, The New York Tribune...., P. 371.

[106] Ishbel Ross, "Skibo Castle and Its Laird in Tartan," The New York Times Magazine Section VII (11 August 1919): 9.

This third component should be mentioned in that sports strongly influenced the spirit of camaraderie among the male staff. Through the myth of "sports are only for men," they perceived Ishbel and Bugbee as outsiders. As general assignment reporters, the women would not test recipes for the "Tribune Institute," but neither would they be invited into the newsroom's "dugout" to discuss Babe Ruth's latest home run. Many sports-minded writers were hired around the time Ishbel came to the Tribune. Gene Fowler wrote about their exploits in Skyline: A Reporter's Reminiscences of the 1920s.

Even if she did not get invited into sports' huddles in the newsroom, Ishbel was now playing in the big leagues. The incautious heroine was on her way to batting a thousand. Four of the staff acquired in the second decade of the twentieth century would make the list of Stanley Walker's best reporters, called "Twelve of New York" and published in his City Editor: W.O. McGeehan, Robert B. Beck, Wilbur Forrest and Ishbel Ross -- a football eleven plus one. Five would later write stories that would be published as The Best Stories of 1923: Robert B. Peck, Grantland Rice, W.O. McGeehan (by then of the New York Herald), Heywood Broun (by then of the New York World), and Ishbel Ross -- a basketball five.